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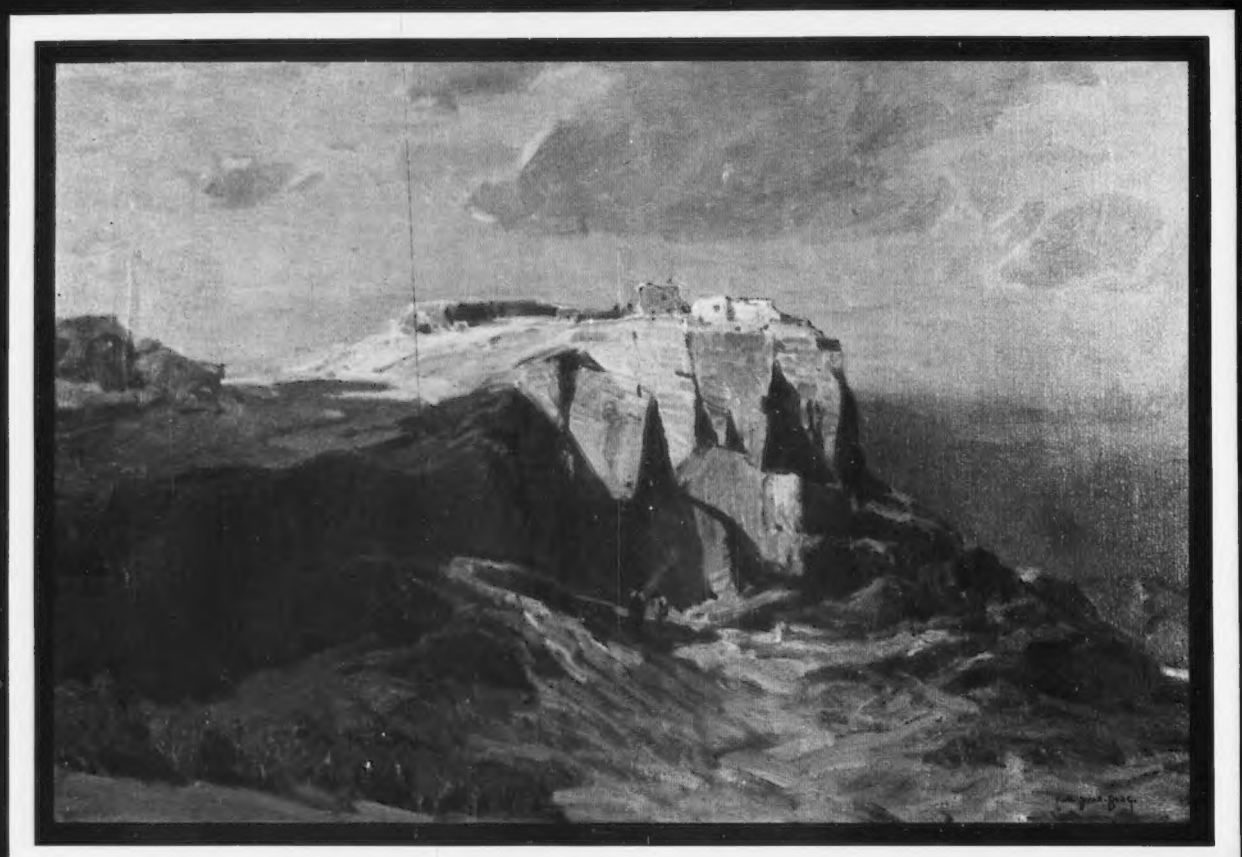

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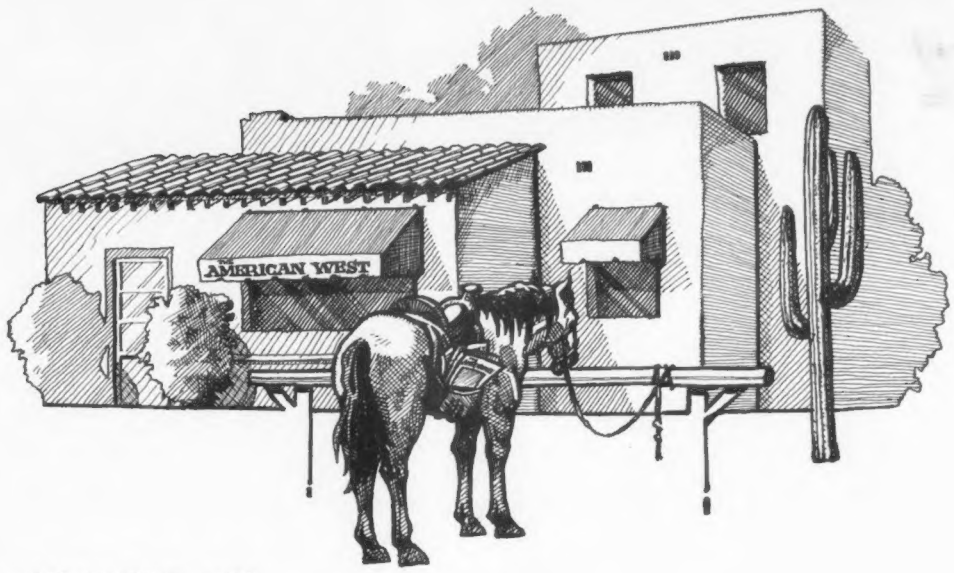

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TO: People on our Complimentary List

Circulation

With this issue, THE AMERICAN WEST's circulation has risen to 55,000—a total reading audience of 160,000. Our growth plans will put us at 75,000 in the Fall. We have applied for membership in the Audit Bureau of Circulation, so our circulation figures will soon bear the important industry stamp of verification.

Reader Survey

On March 20, 1981 Sunbelt Market Research mailed a 6-page survey to a cross-section of our subscribers asking all those questions you and our editors would like to have answered. By late May we will have the results of this comprehensive study ready for the benefit of our advertisers.

Advertising

In this issue, we have over 30 pages of advertising... 57 different advertisers... 29 repeat advertisers. Carol Theroux writes us... "I have had a tremendous response to my first ad Jan./Feb., and have sold the March/April piece so I am very pleased with my investment in the magazine."

Rose Mary Stubbs writes us that "because of an ad Rosequist placed in THE AMERICAN WEST, one of my paintings has sold—my biggest, most expensive to date."

Advertising Closing

Rate Card 7, effective with the July/August 1981 issue, is in the mail to you. Please note that the closing date for material and orders is the 20th of the second month preceding issue (May 20th for the July/August issue). Enough said. Enjoy THE AMERICAN WEST and let us hear your comments.

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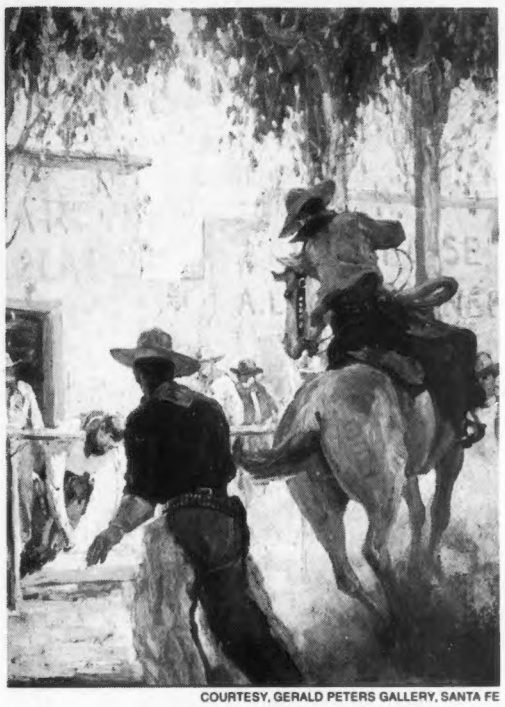

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May/June 1981
Volume XVIII, Number 3

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Editor's Notes

Our route north from Tucson, up through Phoenix and Flagstaff, past Page, and across the Glen Canyon Dam took us into the fastness of southern Utah. With a late winter storm shining the blacktop with patches of ice and driving most travelers from the road, with cold blasts of wind sweeping down from the Kaiparowits Plateau and buttoning up the little Mormon towns until they seemed abandoned, we came to a place where the years flowed backwards and a West emerged from the time before our busy ways touched the land.

The effect was completed as a steady, heavy snowfall obliterated even the lane we had turned onto. Still the car sailed on, silently now over the thickening snow, through vast, flocked lava flows, and down tunnels of snow-heavy pines which muffled the last noisy traces of engine and tire.

The West is full of such places that deepen our awareness, or rather where our awareness becomes full of such places. I'm never certain of the order, but I'm certain others share the experience, and the few Indian words that come down on the written page suggest that the awareness was once quite prevalent. There's something here in the West that's least expected, never explained. (There's something here that's dangerously lost.)

An old Pueblo man quoted in *Ritual of the Wind* by Jamake Highwater says: "You must learn to look at the world twice. . . . First you must bring your eyes together in front so you can see the smoke rising from an ant hill in the sunshine. Nothing should escape your notice. But you must learn to look again, with your eyes at the very edge of what is visible. Now you must see dimly if you wish to see things that are dim—visions, mist, and cloud people . . . animals which hurry past you in the dark. You must learn to look at the world twice if you wish to see all that there is to see."

Sometimes, even if you haven't learned to look again, your eyes find themselves at the very edge of what is visible, and even if you don't wish to see all that's there to see, it is shown to you. You—or at least I—don't know what's seen in those moments, but I sense it is something of the essence of land and sky, something that we're made of and yet something that is, at the same time, outside of us. It's something that we share with all things animate and inanimate.

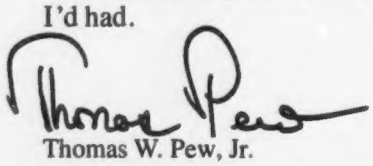
Soon the snow overwhelmed the vision: the car high-centered on a drift; it wasn't, after all, a time machine, but merely a car, and we were hopelessly stuck out in the middle of southern Utah in a very serious snowstorm, with no snow tires or chains, no shovel to dig ourselves out, but probably with enough warm clothes to survive if we had to sit there a day or two before the roads were cleared.

We were spared the final scenario. Within moments, a snowplow came our way, and after some vigorous plowing, some energetic digging, some spreading of thick black cinders beneath the wheels, and finally some towing, we came free of our white trap and were on our way over a freshly cleared road.

I tried to recall the glimpse I had seen out of the corner of my eye, tried to put some intellectual meaning into the experience, but to no avail. The road was just a snow-covered road in southern Utah, and I was apprehensive of getting stuck again in the heavy blanket that continued to fall.

As for the intellectual meaning, there didn't appear to be any. As for reliving the experience again by force of will, that proved as elusive as finding a dream again in the middle of the night. It seemed there was nothing to do but wait, wait for the time I might see dimly again if I were to find the things that are dim—visions, mist, and cloud people . . . animals which hurry past you in the dark.

Wait and be grateful for the glimpse I'd had.



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Editor & Publisher

THE AMERICAN WEST

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Letters

Dear Editor:

First of all, would like to compliment you on THE AMERICAN WEST magazine and its quality articles on the west, old and new. I am writing concerning the article on cowboy boots in the Jan.–Feb. issue.

I'm just a cowpuncher who loves the West, old and new. I was raised a cowboy, and will always be. Where I was raised in New Mexico, a cowboy wore his hand-made boots with a lot of pride. He might not have a closet full of "western" shirts and didn't care about the "cut" of his britches, cause the bottom 18 inches of them were gonna be stuffed into his boot tops anyhow. Those hand-made, high-top boots are still found where real cowpunchers are doing the work that very few people can do, in a land that may have a power line strung through it, but is still not far from the way God made it. When I said a job that not many people can do, I meant there are still cowboys that never see town for weeks at a time, and have never seen the inside of an arena (where rodeos are held), but can take a bronk and make a thirty mile circle gathering wild cattle, in a land with no signs to show them the way to the house.

My hat's off to you and your staff and would sure like to see bigger and more articles on the real cowboy and his *boots*, and life.

Curtis Fort
Bosque Farms,
New Mexico

Dear Editor:

It's doubtless daring from one of your few French readers to express an opinion about the evolution of your magazine. I have been a member of the W.H.A. for years.... Many an issue are on one of my bookshelves, some of them, the first ones, given by American friends wishing to make me acquainted with what I have long considered as a top quality magazine, devoted to the numerous aspects of the fascinating Western history.

I would point out today, if you permit me, that I am tempted to share Mr. Ron Tyler's opinion, as expressed in your January/February issue. Let me take an example in that same issue: "New trails for old-time boots." I will not criticize Mr. Wallis' performance. I just think that such an article is not in its right place in THE AMERICAN WEST.... The picture on page 41 is a mere picture for photo's sake, that would more normally have found its place in LIFE or The Saturday Evening Post.... Journalist work is one thing... but your readers (or, at least, the members of the W.H.A.) are rather expecting the long, strenuous and often discouraging (because limited in its results) job of the historian. You are squeezed between quality (of the contents) and quantity (of readers). Awkward dilemma. Keep the faith!

Daniel Binaud
Bordeaux, France

Dear Editor:

I have been a reader and a subscriber to THE AMERICAN WEST magazine for some time. I have noted with a great deal of interest the improvement in the quality and diversification of the articles of the past year.

In the January/February 1981 issue, I think your article by Michael Wallis entitled "New Trails for Old-Time Boots" is magnificently presented and especially with the color photos by Terrence Moore. The innovativeness of the types of photography are very fresh and are meaningful portrayals of life.

Also, I was impressed with the article "On the Trail of Joaquin Murieta" by Stan Steiner....

R. Y. Henslee
Dallas, Texas

Dear Editor:

I am very disappointed in my first edition of THE AMERICAN WEST magazine. Born and raised in Idaho and Montana and now residing in Utah, I anticipated a magazine with articles and stories dealing with the Old West, articles and stories of little known happenings during the era of western settlement.

However, if my first edition is any indication, that is not what THE AMERICAN WEST magazine is all

Continued on page 12

THE AMERICAN WEST
is published by the
BUFFALO BILL
HISTORICAL CENTER
Cody, Wyoming

THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER is a non-profit institution dedicated to preserving and exhibiting the heritage of the American West. It is also home of four major museums whose exhibits of art, ethnographic materials, and historic artifacts reflect more than one hundred years of America's colorful past. Together the museums at the Center offer an extensive view of frontier life.

The Buffalo Bill Museum, dedicated in 1927, holds the largest collection of Buffalo Bill material in the world. The Whitney Gallery of Western Art, begun in 1959, features masterworks of American painting and sculpture. The Plains Indian Museum, opened in 1969, brings to life the rich traditions of Native Americans in the West. And the Winchester Museum, whose permanent exhibit hall was completed in 1980, records the history of American firearms through the magnificent gun collection Oliver Winchester began in 1860.

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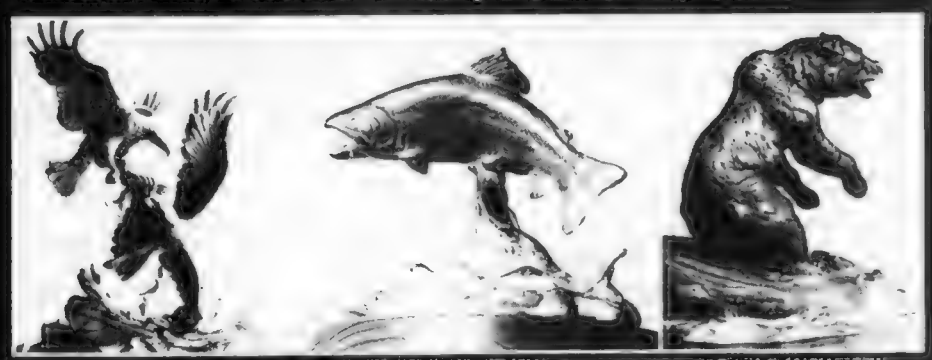

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Jimmy Yellowhair
Gene Zesch

Letters *(Continued from page 10)*

about. Instead, it appears to be a catalog for artists and art gallerys to represent their artistic accomplishments, and for other vendors to advertise their stocks of western memorabilia.

That ain't what I'm looking for in a magazine. Please cancel my subscription!

Curtis L. Young
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Editor:

Not everyone will agree with Pamela Herr that Judge Bean changed the name of his frontier town Vinegarroon to Langtry in 1884 (March/April, 1981). James Marshall in *Sante Fe—The Railroad that Built an Empire* (Random House, Inc., 1945), page 352, writes:

"Incidentally, just west of Santa Fe track down the Pecos River near the Texas–New Mexico state line, is Langtry—which was *not* named for Lily Langtry. Judge Roy Bean, a local gavel-banger, won some fame by informing the Jersey Lily that he had named the town for her and to her death she believed it. The fact is that it was named some years prior to Judge Bean's advent into the region—for a section-foreman."

Adrian Buyse
Stafford–Wayne,
Pennsylvania

Dear Editor:

Your article in the March/April issue at page 16 was titled in a somewhat misleading manner. If it said simply TEXAS CHILI it would have been correct, but to mislead anyone into believing that Texas Chili bore any resemblance to eating chile is beyond comprehension . . . . Where does the spelling Perdinales come from, or is that the way Mr. Johnson pronounced it?

E. L. Mechem
Albuquerque,
New Mexico

Dear Editor:

I very much enjoyed the article in your magazine that Michael Wallis wrote about myself and the other boot makers. Thank you very much for the complimentary copy that you sent me, and I am interested in ten additional copies of that issue. . . .

Charlie Dunn
Austin, Texas

Continued on page 14

Photo courtesy of the Amon Carter Museum

The Chisholm Trail
By Don Worcester

From reata to remuda, from saddle to sourdough, Don Worcester recreates the world of the cowboys on the Chisholm Trail. Generously illustrated with photographs, many never before published, the book vividly and authoritatively presents the reality behind the cowboy legend. xx, 207 pages, 36 photographs. **$14.50**

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Letters *(Continued from page 12)*

Dear Editor:

It is unfortunate that one must get tough with publishers in order to get any action out of them—but my experience with sech critters indicates there is no other recourse. . . . Your response to my nasty letter of February 11th was pleasingly prompt. The missing January/February issue arrived on February 17th. To have missed it entirely would have been a tragedy. The excellent reproduction of Lafayette Maynard Dixon's *Cloud World* is sufficient to make this issue a success. Then there is the extra dividend of all the interesting articles, including that of the boots, marching up and down through the years and revealing history in several aspects, not the least of which is that of the fantastic inflation factor.

I hope there will be no more problems with my subscription. I would be quite unhappy to be without THE AMERICAN WEST.

L. M. Spicer
Brea, California

Dear Editor:

Received first copy of THE AMERICAN WEST, and we are disappointed with it. Too old fashioned—so please cancel our subscription. Thank you.

George Burzenski, Jr.
Thorp, Wisconsin

Dear Editor:

Your AMERICAN WEST is a spectacular magazine. When you open its pages you are THERE, right out in the cholla and sand. . . . I am getting around to writing about the west and wish I knew more about it. But it is easy to learn if you read such magazines as your superb creation. I thought I must compliment you on it.

Ed Reid
Los Angeles,
California

THE AMERICAN WEST welcomes relevant letters from its readers. We will endeavor to print a cross section of those we receive. Please address: Letters to the Editor, THE AMERICAN WEST, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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Western Lookout

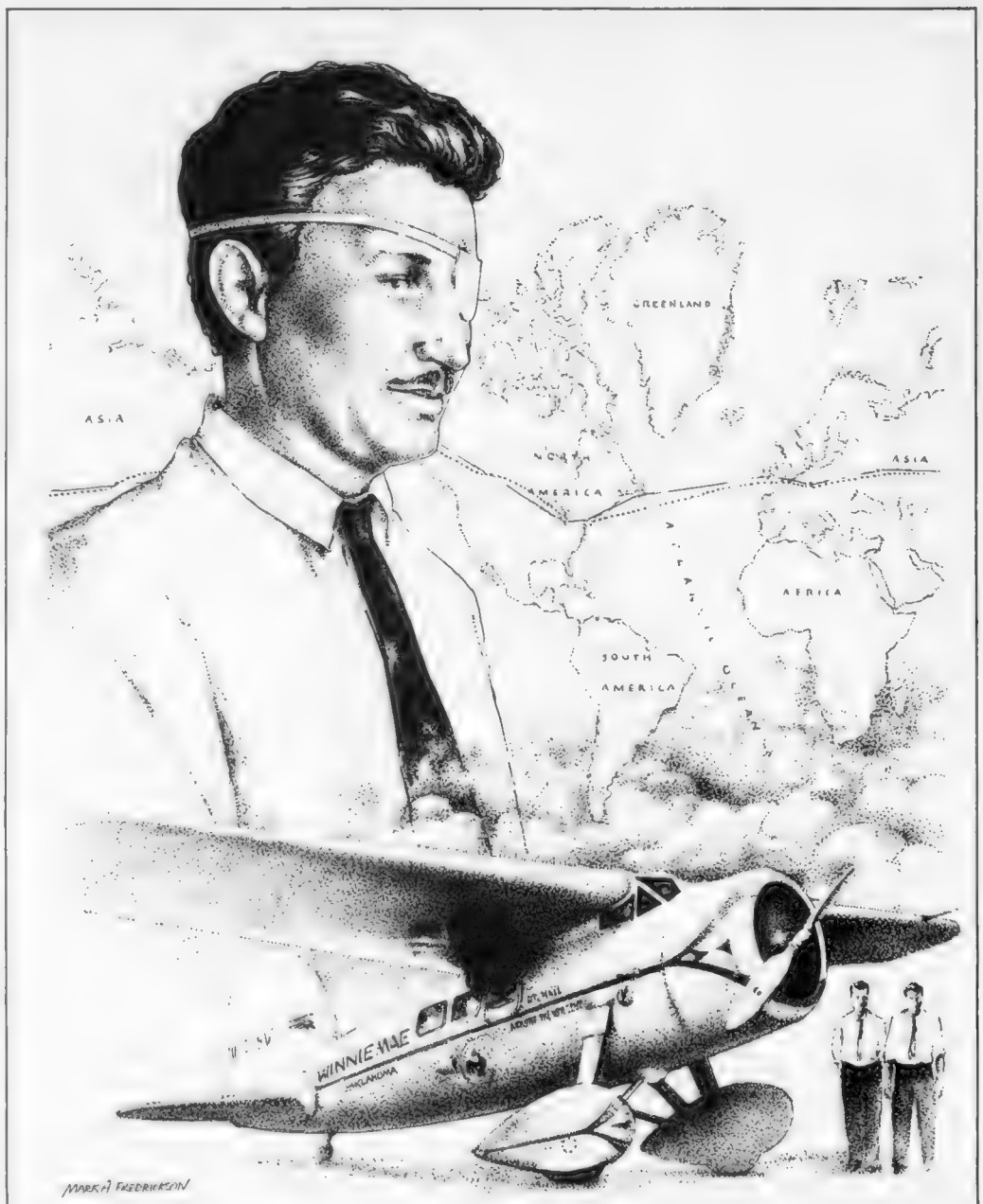
Storytellers Wanted. Plains Indian storytellers, historians, music makers, craft workers, artists, and philosophers are being sought for a new program at the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming. The Plains Indian Heritage Series, June 29 through August 7, will feature thirty-minute presentations by members of Plains Indians tribes in an effort to give the museum a special living dimension. Funding for the project is from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Museum Services.

Call for Papers. The contribution of Dr. John C. Ewers, senior ethnologist emeritus at the Smithsonian Institution, to the study of Plains Indians will be the major theme at the fifth annual Plains Indian Seminar, October 9 through 11. George P. Horse Capture, curator of the Plains Indian Museum which will host the seminar, invites everyone interested in presenting papers to send one-page proposals to him at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Box 1000, Cody, Wyoming 82414.

Photographers and Parks. This country's National Parks have been a source of spectacular possibilities for many American photographers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Images taken by Carleton Watkins and William Henry Jackson as well as by later photographers like Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter will be part of "American Photographers and the National Parks," opening May 2 at the Oakland Museum of Art. Organized by the National Parks Foundation, the exhibit is scheduled to stop in seven cities after leaving California in July.

Pirates and Pirogues. In the early nineteenth century, pirate Jean Lafitte and his buccaneers traveled Louisiana's network of inlets and bayous carrying smuggled Spanish cargo. Lafitte, Louisiana, is now the site of the World Championship Pirogue Races to be held this year on June 28. Racers of all ages will have a chance to show their skills at maneuvering these lightweight craft under the sponsorship of the Lafitte Yacht Club.

Arkansas Tomatoes. For years the fields of southeastern Arkansas have been producing a special jewel known as the pink tomato. The Pink Tomato Festival in Warren, June 12 and 13, will continue a tradition twenty-five years old as area residents gather to celebrate this crop. Dancing in the streets on Friday night will be followed by a tomato-eating contest



Spirit of Winnie Mae ready to fly

Claiming that "aviation needed something original to stimulate passenger business," Oklahoma barnstormer Wiley Post made a record-breaking flight around the world in a Lockheed Vega called *Winnie Mae*. That was in 1931. This spring a similar world-circuit will be made by two Oklahomans eager to honor Post and to stimulate interest in Oklahoma's Diamond Jubilee.

According to flight sponsors at the Oklahoma Air Space Museum, pilot Calvin Pitts and navigator Joe Cunningham will leave New York June 23 (exactly fifty years after Post's takeoff) in a 1980 supercharged Beechcraft Bonanza named *The Spirit of Winnie Mae*. They hope to retrace the exact flight of Post and his navigator Harold Gatty—making fourteen stops during an eight-day journey around the globe. After stops in Newfoundland, England, and Germany, the Oklahoma aviators plan to touch down five times in the Soviet Union (avoiding Post's skid on Siberian mud) before heading across Alaska and back to New York.

Wiley Post would be eighty-three this year, had he survived the plane crash which killed him and Will Rogers in 1935. Friends of Post believe this flight will celebrate with style the aviation adventure he began.

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Saturday morning and an all-tomato lunch at noon. The "pink jewel" is naturally the star ingredient in loaves, salads, and cakes.

Balloon Races. Balloonists gathering Memorial Weekend in Farmington, New Mexico, for the eighth annual Four Corners Hot Air Balloon Rally will have to prove their mettle in the water as well as in the sky. Races begin from the banks of Farmington Lake with a required maneuver called the Splash-n-Dash. The balloons will then race to land as close as possible to a lead balloon. In addition to this hare and hound competition, there will be high altitude races and ground festivities including a parade and barbecue. With over one hundred balloons participating, the Four Corners gala represents one of the largest balloon rallies in the world.

Montana at Home. Full-size re-creations of a cave dwelling, a fur trader's hide lodge, a Crow tipi, and a sheepherder's wagon are all part of the Western Heritage Center exhibit "At Home" in Billings, Montana. Open through 1982, this unusual display reveals man's resourcefulness in making a home within different environments. Authentic furnishings adorn each shelter. "At Home" also suggests the look of homes in future years.

Turtle Road Block. The discovery of six fossilized land turtles near Las Colinas ruins in Phoenix, Arizona, may slow completion of an interstate highway to a turtle's pace. The prehistoric creatures were found by a team from the Arizona State Museum using radar and back hoes. Their find has led the state's transportation department to redesign parts of I-10 in order to preserve the ancient habitat for archaeological study. As many as 600 turtles may be buried in the area. While the uncovered fossils are relatively small, some scientists believe they belong to a species of turtle which grew to Volkswagen size.

Pueblo Weavers. The Pueblo Indians of Arizona and New Mexico are famous for their pottery, but their ancient craftsmanship as weavers is far less known. From June 13 through October 25 the Denver Art Museum will present "Pueblo Textiles," an exhibit featuring nineteenth and early twentieth century examples of Pueblo weaving. The making of baskets from native fibers in very early times was followed by the fashioning of decorative garments, blankets, and complex cotton textiles. Today many aspects of this long tradition are in danger of dying out.

Natural Landmarks. Last November several extraordinary western sites received landmark status. Baldwin Woods in eastern Kansas was chosen as a unique oak-hickory forest. Other new landmarks include central Washington's Umtanum Ridge Water Gap, an example of earth deformation and stream cutting; Big Hollow west of Laramie, Wyoming, a large basin carved by winds during a prehistoric dry period; and Red Canyon south of Lander, Wyoming, which contains rocks left by ancient seas more than 200 million years ago.

Ironworks. Between 1750 and 1850 numerous iron products were created by Hispanic smiths working from Texas to California. "Southwestern Colonial Ironwork," an exhibit at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, displays more than one hundred Hispanic iron artifacts including domestic goods, tools, hardware, and horsemen's gear. The exhibit will continue through September 1.

Colorado Dinosaur. The keen interest of some fourth graders in the stegosaurus, a twenty-foot long dinosaur with a walnut-sized brain, has brought an unusual bill before the Colorado General Assembly. Prompted by a letter from students at McElwain Grade School in Thornton, Colorado, the bill proposes that the stegosaurus be named the official fossil of the state. Remains of this dinosaur were first discovered in Colorado at the Morrison Quarry near Golden in 1877. If the bill passes, the stegosaurus will take a place alongside the Rocky Mountain columbine (the state flower) and the lark bunting (the state bird).

Honoring Possum Trot. More than forty thousand people are expected to celebrate the rich heritage of Kansas City, Missouri, during this year's Possum Trot Frontier Festival May 29 through 31. "Possum Trot" does not refer to a local dance but rather to the city itself. It was a name seriously considered by town founders in the 1840s. Staged at the Kansas City Stockyards, which were once the largest in the country, the festival features games, crafts, and exhibits of ethnic foods.

Go For Broke. The Presidio Army Museum in San Francisco is now featuring the first major exhibit on the history of the Japanese American soldier in World War II. Entitled "Go For Broke," the show reveals the story of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which garnered more than 9,000 Purple Hearts and

Continued on page 65

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June delicacy:

Western wedding cake

by Barbara Segal Goldberg

Grub was the usual fare for those settlers who came West in the 1800s, but when it was time to celebrate a wedding, the recipe changed to gourmet. Always highlighting the festivities was a wedding cake, specially made on the day of the ceremony. Since the hustle and bustle in the bride's house usually did not allow the baking to occur there, a good neighbor customarily baked this prized delicacy as her gift to the new couple.

And truly this gift was a labor of love. Cake was a rare addition to the pioneer diet, partly because it was so difficult to prepare. These desserts were made without the luxury of standardized measures or the even temperature of a modern oven. If a recipe was available, it usually gave only vague directions concerning the amounts of ingredients or cooking time and temperature.

Early western baking was done in a Dutch oven—a big iron pot with a cover—over an open fire. A later innovation for use with a campfire was the reflecting oven, with three sides of tin and shelves to hold the pastry. Before 1870 when the conventional kitchen range first became available in America, ovens were built into the wall of the kitchen fireplace, and usually had no door, damper, or flue to control the heat. The fire was built up high to heat the oven, then allowed to die down for slow baking—an uncontrollable process at best. Sometimes, in an attempt to retain the heat, the cook hammered a door over the oven after placing the cake inside, but this obviously made it difficult to test the cake.

Western cooks also worried about getting their cakes to rise. In the East, pearl ash was used as early as 1790 as a rising agent for cakes. However, this ash, produced by burning wood, left a definite aftertaste. Western cooks probably used ash, but they also experimented with a variety of yeast-like substances they made at home from fermented hops, bran, or pumpkin. Baking powder did not become available in the United States until approximately 1856, commercial yeast not until about 1868.

Sometimes harsh circumstances in the wilderness dictated a poor man's cake, prepared without eggs or milk; many old recipes can be found for eggless cakes. But settlers frequently turned to eggs as a readily available rising agent. The whites were beaten stiff to introduce air into the batter, and wedding cake recipes sometimes called for as many as twenty-four eggs. Since hens laid more eggs in the spring, the cook could usually find an ample supply for a June wedding cake.

Early wedding cakes looked far less fancy than today's frothy versions. Western cooks sometimes poured their batter into milk tins of graduated sizes to bake the desired tiers. But most frequently a simple bread-loaf pan was used to bake a single-layer wedding cake. The cook frosted the cake with an old-time icing, and, traditionally, placed a bouquet of flowers on top.

Such a cake probably would not appeal very much to today's refined palates. Made with stone-ground flour and rough sugar, it resembled a coarse pound cake. But to settlers whose daily fare consisted of beef jerky or wild game, the sweet cake must have seemed a real delicacy.

A cake recipe popular among western settlers was the 1-2-3-4. This cake was given its name from its easily remembered ingredients: 1 cup butter, 2 cups sugar, 3 cups flour, and 4 eggs. The wedding cake, called "Bride's Cake" in many old cookbooks, represented a variation on the usual 1-2-3-4: currants, raisins, or lemon brandy were often added to the batter to make the creation more festive.

Cooking has always been an individual and traditional art, handed down from mother to daughter, strongly influenced by the family's background. Doubtless there were many variations of wedding cakes. The following recipe, a conglomerate of several old ones, yields a simple cake quite similar to those created in pioneer Western homes. Baking powder is the only addition to make this recipe more acceptable to contemporary tastes; modern refined flour will contribute some of the white lightness associated with wedding cakes today.

Western Wedding Cake

2 c. butter
2 c. sugar
4–4½ c. flour, sifted
5 t. baking powder
1 t. salt
1½ c. milk
1 t. vanilla
1 T. brandy
9 egg whites
(serves 12)

Preheat oven to 350°. Have all ingredients at room temperature before beginning the cake. In a very large bowl, cream the butter and add the sugar; beat until fluffy. Sift dry ingredients and add them to the butter mixture, alternating with the milk and flavorings.

Beat the egg whites in a separate bowl until they form soft peaks. Fold the egg whites into the batter. Put the mixture in a greased and floured 10"tube pan. Bake at 350° for one-half to three-quarters of an hour, or until done.

A recipe from a cookbook published in 1833 gives an idea of the type of icing that was used on a real Western wedding cake: "Beat the whites of eggs to an entire froth, and to each egg add 5 teaspoonfuls of sifted loaf sugar, gradually; beat it a great while. Put it on when your cake is hot or cold, as is most convenient. It will dry in a warm room, a short distance from a gentle fire or in a warm oven." We suggest you substitute a simple modern white icing, flavored with brandy.

Finally, collect a bouquet of spring flowers to adorn the top of your Western wedding cake. **AW**

Barbara Segal Goldberg *is a lawyer who also enjoys doing gourmet experiments in her kitchen.*

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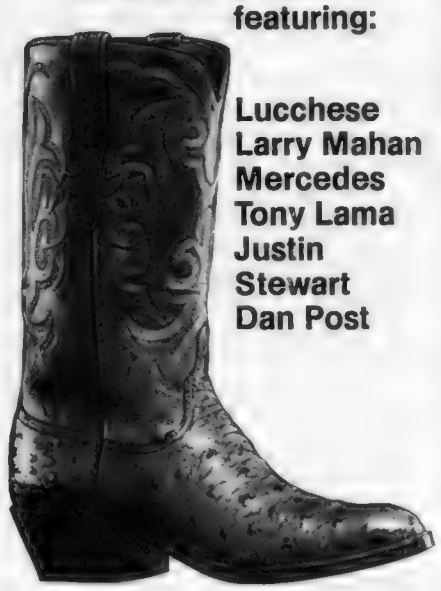

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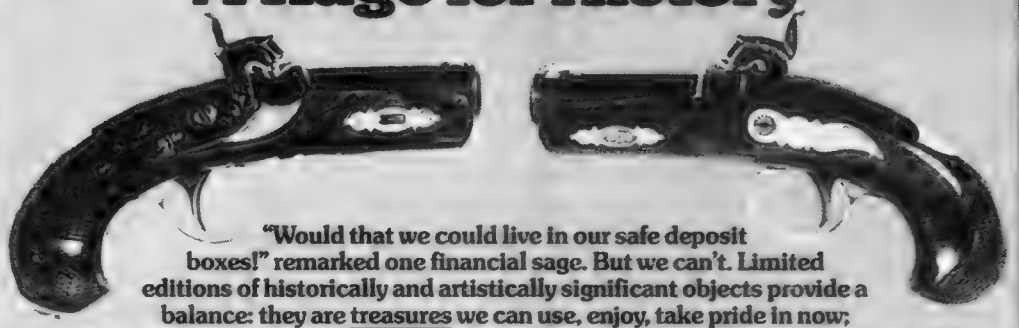

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East Brother Light Station:

California Island Inn

by Susan D. Cole

COURTESY, EAST BROTHER LIGHT STATION, INC

A ten-minute boat ride from California's Point San Pablo can bring the adventuresome traveler to the tiny and delightfully self-contained world of East Brother Island. Situated in the narrow strait connecting San Pablo and San Francisco bays, and smaller than a football field, this habitat for seabirds is also a surprising home of man. On it stands the handsome Victorian structure of East Brother Light Station, for years the secluded post of lighthouse keepers and now a bed-and-breakfast inn as well.

The island's interesting history began in 1873 when the U.S. government chose East Brother as the site for a new lighthouse. Only one-third mile from the mainland and blessed with a mild climate, East Brother Island quickly became a favorite duty among lighthouse keepers or "wickies" (so nicknamed because they trimmed the wicks of oil lamps).

In 1894 John Stenmark and his family began service that was to last twenty years. Showing the typical self-reliance of lighthouse keepers, the Stenmarks raised their own vegetables in dirt hauled from the Richmond shore and guano collected from West Brother Island, a nearby nesting place for waterfowl. Goats, pigs, chickens, and rabbits were also raised by the island family. They kept the red rooftops of station buildings scrubbed clean, channeling vital rainwater into a central cistern.

After the Stenmarks' retirement, a succession of lighthouse keepers continued to care for the station, operating the foghorn and maintaining the beacon. Then, in 1968 officer-in-charge Joseph Picotte was notified that the station would be automated, its personnel dismissed, and its historic facilities torn down. With the Coast Guard's installation of automated light and sound equipment in 1969, man's stay on East Brother came to a temporary end.

However, preservation-minded Richmond citizens in the Contra Costa Shoreline Committee began a successful rescue effort. The light station was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, and by 1977 a nonprofit organization was formed to restore and operate the station under U.S. Coast Guard license. Known as East Brother Light Station, Inc., this group began an intensive six-month renovation program last year with the aid of a $67,500 Maritime Preservation Grant.

Freshly painted its original colors of rich golden beige with white trim, the light station now offers hospitality as well as history to overnight guests. Since only two guest bedrooms are available at this picturesque retreat, visitors can count on individual attention and a peaceful atmosphere.

The traveler's stay at East Brother Island promises to be an adventure from beginning to end. Guests are picked up at the San Pablo Yacht Harbor by an open, seventeen-foot Boston Whaler, courtesy of East Brother Light Station, Inc. During the short journey to the island, passengers often observe grebes and other waterfowl as well as an occasional sea lion cavorting in the water.

Upon arrival at the tiny island, whose perimeter is rimmed by a white picket fence, guests climb from the bobbing boat up a dock ladder four to ten feet in height depending on the tides. Luggage and heavy cargo are hoisted by crane and basket. At this point, island visitors receive a warm welcome and escort from Less McDonald and Patricia Jackson, East Brother's present caretakers.

The attractive 1873 lighthouse has several levels. Caretakers' quarters and a delightful brick-walled kitchen are downstairs, with the two fully furnished guest bedrooms on the level above. Each has a brass double bed and private bath (to be used with restraint because of the island's limited water supply). Other comforts on this floor include a parlor with a wood-burning stove, sofa, and game table, as well as a library and the station's dining room. Each room presents stunning views of the Bay. At the highest level of the station is the light turret, surrounded by an outdoor catwalk which guests can reach by a spiral stairway.

Life on East Brother is full of simple pleasures. Guests can sketch, read, fish (if they have brought tackle), or just relax. While swift currents make swimming forbidden, boat trips are available, and shuttles to Point San Pablo run three or four times a day.

In the evening, overnight visitors dine on a gourmet meal including entree, salad, bread, and wine. Continental breakfast consists of a sweet roll, fresh squeezed orange juice, and coffee. An overnight stay with meals, available Wednesday through Sunday, is $125 per couple.

Due to the limited number of rooms, reservations must be made well in advance and prepaid. Interested parties should call the station's mainland answering service, (415) 233-2385, or write to East Brother Light Station, 117 Park Place, Point Richmond, CA 94801. **AW**

Susan D. Cole *is the author of* Richmond—Windows to the Past.

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Historian of the American Frontier

Ray Allen Billington

1903–1981

COURTESY, THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY

Ray Allen Billington, distinguished historian of the West, died suddenly in San Marino, California, on March 7. We are among the legion of friends and admirers who mourn his passing. The following tribute is written by Martin Ridge, Senior Research Associate in the Huntington Library, who has been student, friend, and colleague to Ray Billington.

Tribute by Martin Ridge

RAY ALLEN BILLINGTON was once described as a most unlikely Westerner. He was born and reared in Michigan; he was educated at Michigan, Wisconsin, and Harvard; he was not given to camping on the continental divide or fly-casting in the Sierra; he was no seeker after the paths of explorers or frontiersmen; in fact, he scarcely stepped foot west of the Mississippi River until after he had written much of his extraordinary text, *Westward Expansion*. Ray Billington preferred to explore the West from a good library and to see the West from the club car of the Super Chief or the windows of his air-conditioned Chrysler. If he tramped the outdoors to enjoy the encampment of the Death Valley Forty-Niners, it was only to retire to a good steak cooked over a modern grill. He did not belong to the buffalo-chip, outdoor school of Westerners, but he never scoffed at the members of that noble breed.

What turned this urbane Middle Westerner into the man who did more than anyone else to explain the American West in our time? It began when a friend, James Blaine Hedges, signed a contract with the Macmillan company to write a book about the frontier and sought out Ray Billington, a brilliant writer, to be his coauthor. Hedges planned to be the senior contributor, but it was soon evident that he would not finish his share, and gradually Ray Billington took over writing the book until only three chapters—those on Texas, Oregon, and

California—were Hedges' contribution to *Westward Expansion*.

Like Hedges, Ray Billington took Frederick Merk's class in the American Frontier while at Harvard, but he was not trained by Merk to be a Western historian. He studied with Harvard's pioneering social and intellectual historian, Arthur Schlesinger, and Ray Billington's first book was a classic study of American nativism, *The Protestant Crusade*. At Hedges' urging, Ray Billington turned from social history to the frontiering experience of the American people. He was an academic "eastern gunslinger" brought into the field of Western history to do a job.

The American West proved to be Ray Billington's tar baby: once he touched it, he could not let go, and his other research projects were soon forgotten. By this time he was the William Smith Mason Professor of History in Northwestern University, where he wrote *The Far Western Frontier*, a splendid volume on American expansion in the New American Nation series. But like the mythical armed gunfighter, Billington had notes—would travel. He soon followed a trail that led him across the Mississippi River, through South Pass, and on to California and the Huntington Library where, as Senior Research Associate, he would write *America's Frontier Heritage, The Genesis of the Frontier Thesis, Frederick Jackson Turner* (which won for him the prestigious Bancroft Prize of the American Historical Association), and his last major historical study, *Land of Savagery, Land of Promise*. He never tired of exploring Western themes and produced a series of superbly edited works, of which the best known is *"Dear Lady": The Letters of Frederick Jackson Turner and Alice Forbes Perkins Hooper, 1910—1932*.

Ray Billington virtually lost track of the number of essays he wrote about the West and the number of talks that he gave to Westerners' Corrals, young people, learned societies, and groups that loved the West and could listen endlessly to his stories about discovering a new fact, turning a new idea, or glimpsing some new insight that helped people understand themselves better. His lectures and essays had a remarkably human quality; he wrote in a direct style, often quoting the words of the people who broke the sod, lived in a dugout, moved cattle, or turned an honest or dishonest dollar west of the Pecos.

Throughout his writings one theme persisted: the westering experience shaped the character of the American people, generating a spirit of independence and self-reliance that helped make American institutions democratic and Americans personally egalitarian in their behavior. From the hard-scrabble farmer on the upper Arkansas River to the last mountain man, each lived out his life, according to Ray Billington, in a deeply held belief that his nation's destiny and his freedom were rooted in the West, the last best chance.

Ray Billington was not only Frederick Jackson Turner's biographer but also a thoroughgoing follower of the Turner school of Western historians. Yet, he was not naively simplistic about taking Turner as gospel. Billington set out clearly the limitations of Turner's perceptions of the westering experience of the American people. However, these limitations did not diminish Turner in Billington's eyes, and he felt that Turner offered Americans and scholars throughout the world an explanation of this country that recent scholarship has not set aside.

Despite his commitment to the theory of the uniqueness of America and his belief that this nation's democratic institutions and exploitative practices were set deep in the pioneering period, Ray Billington was never a hidebound prisoner of what he had written. In edition after edition of *Westward Expansion* subtle changes reflected his masterful control of the developing historical research on the West. He came to the study of the West with a profound liberal faith in social democracy. He soon realized that historians had not been honest in what they had said or more likely left unsaid about Indians, Mexican-Americans, and Blacks. He repeatedly revised portions of his books to indicate his expanding awareness of the sensitivities of minorities. Yet his faith in a society that embraced a whole American culture rather than an America made up of a compilation of various cultures was evident in his preface to the fourth edition of *Westward Expansion:* "The understandable need of minority groups for a prideful association with a cultural heritage has outmoded these beliefs of a generation ago, and today authors are obligated to let Negroes and Mexican-Americans or Indians speak loudly from their pages. Yet I cannot resist the lingering hope that all men will be recognized as a part of the family of mankind, all equal, all deserving of recognition for their exploits or ideas, rather than because of race, color, creed, or nationality."

Because of Ray Billington's outstanding work in American history and his unusual service to historical organizations, there were few honors and fewer offices that were not bestowed on him. He was the "founding president" of the Western History Association and one of the earliest and continuing supporters of THE AMERICAN WEST magazine. He was a trustee of the Newberry Library and a Senior Research Associate in the Huntington Library, two bastions for the study of the West. He was the first Vivian Harmsworth Professor to give lectures on the American Frontier at Oxford University. But he was equally proud of having won the Golden Spur award as a Western writer and of his service as president of Westerners International.

Ray Billington never left a letter unanswered, whether it came from an innocent youngster in an elementary school or a contentious colleague in a great university. And although he often said that he disliked teaching, his correspondence with people in all walks of life was virtually a school where he shared his ideas, instructed novices, cheered on the work of others even when they disagreed with him, and stimulated and encouraged the thinking of scholars and researchers in many aspects of the American past. Since his horizons expanded steadily during his life, his correspondence brought him into contact with people from many parts of the world. He was an enthusiastic advocate of comparing the American experience with that of people in other countries.

Only those who knew Ray Billington intimately were aware of his love of humor and his personal wit. Readers will soon have a chance to sample them when his most recent book, now in the press, *Limericks: Historical and Hysterical* is published. His favorite limerick, at least one that can be told in mixed company, is a classic: "The limerick packs laughs anatomical / Into space that is quite economical / But the good ones I've seen / Are seldom clean / And the clean ones seldom are comical."

James Thorpe, director of the Huntington Library, once wrote, "What the world needs now is more Ray Billingtons." Who can add to that.

AW

COURTESY OF IVAN DUNTON

W. HERBERT DUNTON: HE DEVOTED A LIFETIME TO PAINTING THE REAL WEST

BY PATRICIA CONDON JOHNSTON

As the compelling portrait above reveals, Dunton wore a look of urgency even as a young artist of twenty-seven. He was determined to capture on canvas the rapidly disappearing world of the Old West. The appealing works on the following pages reflect Dunton's overriding involvement with the people, animals, and landscapes of his beloved West.

(Opposite)
Ralph Phillips
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, 1908, 30"x 22"

IN HIS HEYDAY DURING THE EARLY YEARS of this century, W. Herbert "Buck" Dunton was among the busiest and most successful of New York illustrators. At one time he was supplying artwork to some twenty magazines, and in the span of a few years he illustrated the incredible number of forty-nine books. His output was voluminous, and his income reflected his success. By the time Dunton reached thirty, he was a wealthy man. Then, at the peak of his career, he quit New York to move to Taos where he could devote his whole time and enthusiasm to painting "fine art."

Dunton's money ran out, and he was never again well-to-do. Since his wife could not endure the primitive living conditions in New Mexico, his marriage ended in a permanent separation. Committed to serious painting, Dunton needed little else to satisfy himself. "I have learned to live with my own mind," he told the press, "to have few material wants, to enjoy myself in the open—or with a good book. I believe I have found the secret of contentment, which is the work I love and the enjoyment of simple things." His legacy is a collection of Western American art at its finest.

William Herbert Dunton was born August 28, 1878, in Augusta, Maine, to William Henry and Anna Katherine Pillsbury Dunton. His father was a professional photographer employed by the *Kennebee Journal*. Young Dunton's lifelong love of the outdoors was inspired by his Grandfather Pillsbury, "Gramps." Bert's summers were spent in the company of his younger brother John at the Pillsbury farm near Palmira, Maine, a region of well-watered woods where wild game, both large and small, was plentiful. The grandfather would put aside almost any chore to take the boys hunting or fishing.

When Bert was ten, Gramps tore down an old barn. The two boys salvaged the best of the scrapped boards and shingles and hauled them to the edge of the pasture where they put up a camp. A friend gave each of them a rifle. Soon, Bert built himself a second camp so "that we might live apart like lonely hunters." Frontier fever was widespread, and the boys played out the tales they read. They slunk about in wide-brimmed hats, their belts bristling with discarded pistols and butcher knives borrowed from the kitchen. When they visited each other, the boys talked about grizzly "b'ars" and "Injuns." On a good day they dined on pine squirrel roasted on a forked stick. In his mind, Bert Dunton was already a Westerner.

Bert was also sketching enthusiastically during these growing-up years. He was just twelve when he first submitted illustrations for hunting and fishing articles to New York magazines. Two years later he was producing the text and sketches for his own page in *Recreation* magazine, a feature he continued for three years. At sixteen, bent on earning a grubstake so that he might hunt and paint in the West, he quit school to clerk in a clothing store in Augusta. After two years, in the summer of 1896, Dunton packed his sketchbooks, shouldered a new Winchester, and left by train for Livingston, Montana.

COURTESY OF GERALD PETERS GALLERY, SANTA FE

STARK MUSEUM OF ART, ORANGE, TEXAS

In Montana, Dunton became acquainted with a grizzly hunter (thought to have been William H. Wright, the author of several books on bears), and the two became fast friends, hunting the mountains together. At the same time, Dunton was filling his sketchbooks with animal studies. He wanted absolute fidelity in his drawings, and he spent many hours making live studies in the wild. Whenever he bagged any game, he propped it up and sketched it, then skinned it out, and detailed the muscles. During winter weather he might keep a frozen carcass a week or more until he was satisfied that he had learned all he could from it. To support himself during this apprenticeship of sorts, Dunton sometimes worked with his bear-hunting friend, supplying game to cattle outfits. More often, though, he earned his keep as a cowboy.

Dunton liked cowboying. He always would. But it never paid well. A *top* hand then might get $45 a month, and Dunton, now answering to "Buck," admitted he was a failure as a "puncher." "I used to be able to ride some pretty mean horses," he told a reporter years later, "but I never could rope—not even a dill pickle." So, in the winter of 1897, less than two years after he had left home, and sorely in need of money, he returned East and opened a small art studio in Boston. For the next dozen years, Dunton spent the winters doing commercial work in order to finance his annual summer pilgrimages to the West.

THE ARTIST DUNTON was scarcely noticed in Boston. He did some magazine illustrations and accepted commissions for any manner of artwork, including advertisements and political cartoons. To make ends meet, Dunton sometimes worked part time at Charles H. Mason's clothing store. While in Boston, he attended classes at the Cowles Art School.

In June of 1900 the newspapers announced that Dunton had married a Boston girl, Nellie Hartley. The pair honeymooned briefly at Niagara Falls, then made their way to Montana where Dunton had secured ranch jobs for both of them. While he mended fences, Nellie cooked for the cowhands. Her husband was certainly in his element, but the new bride could hardly have been comfortable in the one-room cabin, built partially below ground, that the couple shared with the rest of the crew. A blanket hanging from a ceiling rafter provided their only privacy. But Buck was dreaming grand dreams. When he returned East in the fall, he bought tickets to New York, not Boston.

"I used to be able to ride some pretty mean horses, but I never could rope—not even a dill pickle."

STARK MUSEUM OF ART, ORANGE, TEXAS

(Near left)
The Outpost
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 25"x 32"

(Opposite)
Cowgirl with Red Scarf
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 27"x 21"

Dunton wanted absolute fidelity in his drawings. He spent many hours making live studies of animals in the wild.

COURTESY OF GERALD PETERS GALLERY, SANTA FE

(Above)
Timberline
Oil on board by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 30"x 30"

(Opposite)
Rain in the Peaks
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 15"x 13"

On Manhattan, Dunton found his pot of gold. Western themes had captured the public imagination, and Dunton arrived in New York to find publishers clamoring for the kind of illustration he understood and did best. Competition was always lively; good illustrators were plentiful. But Buck Dunton held an advantage. A cowboy at heart, and with practical experience, he knew the subject matter intimately.

Everybody's magazine printed the first series of Dunton's western pictures to accompany "A Fool and a Mule" by W. G. Ogden in 1906. Other magazines, including *Cosmopolitan, McClure's, Harper's, Collier's,* and the *Saturday Evening Post,* soon used his pictures, also. Book publishers like Scribner's, Harper's, and Macmillan pressed Dunton for illustrations. He furnished the artwork for the first short stories that O. Henry published. Best known of the more than four dozen books he illustrated are the Zane Grey classics, *Riders of the Purple Sage, Wanderer of the Wasteland,* and *Under Western Stars.*

Nellie gave birth to four children—three sons (two of whom died in infancy) and a daughter—during these New York years. When his bank account swelled, Buck moved his family from a cramped studio apartment to a rambling house in a fashionable New Jersey neighborhood. Behind the house, a roomy barn served well as an at-home studio where Dunton could keep the accumulation of paraphernalia he used as props for his paintings. Year after year, he brought home all manner of cowboy gear from his summer travels as well as Indian and Mexican clothing and accoutrements. At one time Dunton's collection included enough Civil War uniforms and personal equipment to outfit an entire cavalry platoon, either Federal or Confederate. (Much of this material went to a museum in Dunton's hometown of Augusta when the family moved to Taos. A good part of it was pilfered when the museum was left unattended, sometimes for months at a time. What remains can be seen at the Kit Carson museum in Taos.)

STARK MUSEUM OF ART, ORANGE, TEXAS

Dunton painted, not to please his clients, but to satisfy himself. He wanted to live at his own pace, in the West.

STARK MUSEUM OF ART, ORANGE, TEXAS

(Above)
Philosopher of the Hills
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 50⅞"x 46¼"

(Opposite)
October Gold
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 20"x 16"

But Buck was growing restless. Each year he stayed longer in the West, recuperating from his hectic Eastern schedule. And his enthusiasm for commercial illustration, then considered a stepchild to fine art, was waning. In just a few years, he had obtained all that could be had in the field. There were no higher prices. Besides, he was after something more.

Dunton wanted to paint, not to meet his clients' requirements, but to satisfy himself. He wanted to live at his own pace, in the West. The deed would cost him dearly, but in 1914 he packed up his family and moved permanently to the sleepy Indian village of Taos.

Ernest L. Blumenschein, an academically trained painter whom Dunton came to know in New York, had ''discovered'' Taos several years earlier with artist Bert Phillips on a painting and camping trip. Rimmed by the pine-covered Sangre de Cristo mountains to the northeast, Taos Valley is a wide, flat mesa at 7,000 feet above sea level, contained dramatically on the western edge by the steep-walled Rio Grande gorge. For untold centuries, Indians have occupied picturesque Taos Pueblo, living in adobe rooms piled one atop the other in cliff-dwelling fashion. The Spaniards built their own adobes here in the seventeenth century.

Blumenschein and Phillips were some of the first Anglos to settle in Taos. They were joined by fellow artists Joseph Henry Sharp, Oscar E. Berninghaus, E. Irving Couse, and Dunton. Together these six formed the Taos Society of Artists, ''to develop a high standard of art'' among themselves. Their paintings became known in museums and galleries in the East and in Europe, drawing worldwide attention to Taos.

STARK MUSEUM OF ART, ORANGE, TEXAS

STARK MUSEUM OF ART, ORANGE, TEXAS

THE DUNTONS LIVED AT FIRST in an adobe on Ledoux Street that later became the Blumenschein house. But Nellie's stay was short-lived. The sun-drenched vistas that charmed her husband never compensated for what she considered unsanitary living conditions. She could not abide the lack of plumbing, central heat, and electricity. Consequently, the marriage broke apart. After Nellie took the children back East, Dunton bought a handsome two-story adobe, stoutly walled, high on the hill, that he named *La Solana* (the sunny place). It had been a gambling and dance hall in Kit Carson's day.

Dunton came and went as he pleased now, frequently camping out, hunting and sketching in the back country, no matter the season or weather. When he was seen in town, he had an air of urgency about him. This tall, transplanted Yankee, dressed in cowboy clothes (down to his square-knotted neckerchief), never wasted time. The West that had been the stuff of his dreams was changing. In his own way, he meant to preserve a part of it. Not for profit, but fired by loftier goals, he decided on a mission.

"The west has passed," he wrote, "—more's the pity. In another twenty-five years the oid-time westerner will have gone, too—gone with the buffalo and the antelope. I'm going to hand down to posterity a bit of the unadulterated *real thing*."

At home, he was an all-day painter, beginning work as early as five in the morning and painting until dark. It was his habit to begin a painting with a pencil or charcoal sketch on paper, then to make a rough color composition in oil. If this preliminary work pleased him, the subject was enlarged on canvas in charcoal, fixed, then carefully detailed in oils. Dunton was a perfectionist who would not hesitate to scrape away several days' work with his pallet knife. When a problem persisted, sleep eluded him, and he returned to his studio in the night to work by lamp or candlelight.

Dunton of Taos (as he often signed his later paintings) never achieved the financial success he had known in New York. He experienced hard times during the Depression, trading pictures for groceries and dental work. But his free-spirited canvases, painted in proud, bold brush strokes, told his accomplishment. Unlike his fellow Taos painters who preferred Indian subjects, Dunton never gave up his wildlife and cowboy themes. Only his style changed. Painting to please his finely tuned aesthetic taste, he created highly emotional, compelling, and powerfully individualistic masterpieces.

Oil-rich Texans and other affluent Americans were sometimes his patrons. Douglas Fairbanks bought *The Open Range* for the reception hall at Pickfair in Beverly Hills. Franklin Roosevelt chose *Fall in the Foothills* for The White House. Dunton's favorite, *The Cattle Buyer,* shown in numerous exhibits in this country and abroad between 1922 and 1929, was purchased by H. J. L. Stark. (This painting now hangs in the Stark Museum in Orange, Texas, which owns the largest collection of Dunton paintings.) Though Dunton did not become prosperous again, he received a fair measure of recognition.

Buck Dunton died of cancer in 1936 at the age of fifty-seven, leaving many projects undone. He had hoped to complete his autobiography, already outlined. Beginning with his childhood, he expected to recount his lifelong love affair with the American West. Unabashedly, he had already titled it *The Story of a Happy Life*. **AW**

COURTESY OF IVAN DUNTON

Dunton of Taos liked to work in the open, concentrating on wildlife and cowboy themes. His personal life reflected his major interests, as he habitually dressed in Western clothes and spent much of his time camping out and painting in the back country.

(Opposite)
Indian Rider in Snow
Oil on canvas by W. Herbert Dunton, n.d., 46"x 34"

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

This article is based on an unpublished biography of the artist by his son, Ivan Dunton. Also see: "Dunton—Westerner" by F. Warner Robinson in *The American Magazine of Art,* October, 1924, pp. 501–508; and *Pioneer Artists of Taos* by Laura M. Bickerstaff, 1955, pp. 55–68. My personal interest in Dunton reached a high point a few years ago when my husband and I were able to purchase one of Dunton's small oil sketches from his son. There were cartons of similar on-location sketches in Dunton's studio when he died, along with instructions to destroy all of them. His son and daughter built a bonfire and were already burning the sketches when they decided to call a halt to the destruction. Our sketch is one of those saved from the fire.

Patricia Condon Johnston *is a free-lance writer living in Afton, Minnesota.*

Erle Stanley Gardner: Love of the West led him to best-seller lists

by Francis L. and Roberta B. Fugate

Erle Stanley Gardner relaxes at his memento-strewn desk in his study at Rancho del Paisano. The desk, "possibly measurable in rods instead of inches," and the entire contents of the study were moved to a replica of the room at the Academic Center of the University of Texas at Austin where they are now on exhibit.

HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR HIS LOVE OF THE WEST, Erle Stanley Gardner probably would have devoted himself solely to the practice of law. There would have been no Perry Mason to boost him to the title he still holds in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the "top-selling author."

Gardner was thirteen when his father, a mining engineer, brought him to Oroville, California, in 1902. At that time Oroville was considered "the gold dredging center of the world," and Erle began his exploration of the West by prowling around old mines after school. Life in the rough-and-ready mining town did not make him an exemplary student, but it did instill a love of the outdoors which would never dull. It was this love that ultimately led to his writing career.

Erle's brief experience with higher education ended in a fistfight with a professor. This persuaded both his father and Gardner that his free-spirited nature was not suited for the discipline of formal academic training. But he was convinced that he wanted to be a lawyer; so he learned law the old-

COURTESY, HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTER, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

fashioned way by reading in law offices. He passed the bar examination in 1910 at the age of twenty-one and began practice in Oxnard, California.

Life there was lusty, revolving around a sugar beet factory. Oxnard's numerous busy brothels and brawling saloons catered to agricultural workers, and in a thriving Chinatown, gamblers garnered most of the loose change left over from the fleshpots and watering places. Shortly after Gardner's arrival, a grand jury convened twelve miles away in Ventura, the highly respectable county seat, to decree that Oxnard should be cleaned up. The district attorney hired a flock of private investigators and went to work.

The parlor houses closed, and the madams departed. Violence subsided in the saloons. Gambling continued by virtue of a tacit agreement that the Chinese would not be hindered if they confined their operations to the lottery and fan-tan. However, the district attorney developed a financial problem. He had spent almost $2,000 on investigators, a sizeable bill to present to any county in those days, and he decided to recoup his loss by fining Chinese gamblers. Evidence was collected, and twenty-one men were tagged for arrest. If each could be fined $100 or $150 for selling lottery tickets, the operation would turn a handy profit.

Gardner's firm was employed to defend the Chinese. One of the lawyers who could speak what sounded like Chinese got the first defendant acquitted by convincing a detective who did not know the difference between a Chinese lottery ticket and a laundry bill that there had been a mix-up. Gardner was slated to defend the next case and devised a ploy which would do credit to Perry Mason at his best. He reasoned that Caucasian detectives probably did not know one Chinese from another and identified suspects by the places where they worked. The night before the next arrest was scheduled, Gardner went to Chinatown and switched workers from one business to another; nobody remained in his own place of business.

The following afternoon the district attorney and his minions headed for the establishment of Wong Duck, against whom they thought they had an ironclad case. They hoped that the evidence would be so overwhelming that Wong Duck would plead guilty and pay his fine, as would the other nineteen defendants. But the man they arrested insisted he was not Wong Duck. "Wait a minute," said a local deputy who had made a number of Chinatown arrests. "That's *not* Wong Duck."

While the district attorney was trying to sort out the mess, the Oxnard newspaper got wind of the affair and came up with the headline "Wong Duck May Be Wrong Duck Says Deputy Sheriff." The district attorney decided to drop all the gambling cases, and young Erle Stanley Gardner became *t'ai chong tze*—"the big lawyer"—as far as the Chinese were concerned. Thus, Gardner accumulated a following of loyal friends and clients, who incidentally launched him upon a study of the Chinese people and their language and who one day would provide him with background material for thousands upon thousands of words of fiction.

But Gardner did not yet know that he was going to be a writer. That came a decade later when he discovered that the confining demands of a legal career were greatly restricting the time he wanted to spend pursuing his love affair with Nature and the West.

GARDNER REVELED IN THE COURTROOM ASPECT OF LAW, but he hated the hours of office tedium behind every trial. Later he had Perry Mason tell Della Street about it in *The Case of the Howling Dog:* "I don't like routine. I want excitement. I want to work on matters of life and death, where minutes count. I want the bizarre and the unusual." Lawyer Mason echoed his creator's views on life for forty years through eighty-two novels and three novelettes.

In an unpublished autobiography Gardner recorded, "I had long ago decided that the only persons who could be completely independent, unless they were wealthy, were writers who could take their work with them and persons who had a mail order business which required but little personal attention." In 1921 Gardner made an unsuccessful stab at writing and turned to a mail order business as a part-time adjunct to law. But he quickly discovered that the business required full-time management, and in 1923 he settled down in earnest to learn to write. Later, Gardner told about it: "I knew absolutely, positively, utterly nothing about writing. I had no natural talent as a writer. I knew nothing about plotting. I only knew that *I* wanted to write and sell stories."

Gardner taught himself to write in the same practical way he had learned law, writing for the pulp market by night after practicing law all day. Suffering a ninety percent rejection rate, he set himself a quota of 60,000 words a month. To maintain this staggering output, he turned to the subject matter he knew best—the West—and stole as much time from the law office as possible to roam the backcountry in search of material. His schedule is reflected in a letter he wrote to an editor who had ordered a story: "A lucky break in the law, and because I knew you were in a rush, has enabled me to put in a straight twenty-four hours with the exception of six for sleeping."

Even though Gardner cut his participation in law practice to three-fourths time, his study in Ventura was too close to the law office. He solved this problem by acquiring a "camp wagon"—a forerunner of today's self-contained motor home. It was a cumbersome, boxy structure on a 1927 Chevrolet truck chassis, quite a rig for its day. The vehicle housed a bed, stove, icebox, pressure cooker, clothes closet, water tanks, writing desk, typewriter desk, files, storage space for a three-month food supply, and of course a typewriter and a supply of paper and manuscript envelopes. Gardner added innovations. He routed the exhaust through a water tank to heat water for the full-sized bathtub which he installed under the bed. Along the way, he picked up Navajo rugs for the floor and kept his bow and arrows at hand to augment the food supply. Later he added a photographic darkroom and dictating equipment.

"When I decide to go some place," he wrote, "I won't need to do anything except walk up to the camp wagon, open the door, and step on the starter."

Gardner's beloved West proved to be a gateway to fortune. He wrote both traditional and contemporary Western stories, as

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"I don't like routine. I want excitement. I want to work on matters of life and death, where minutes count. I want the bizarre and the unusual."

Gardner bought a camp wagon built on a 1927 Chevrolet truck chassis so that he could go to out-of-the-way places and write Westerns "right on the ground." The interior of the camp wagon shows Gardner's ever-present typewriter and bow and arrows. The typewriter was a Remington Model 12 with cushion keys, 1922–32 vintage. As usual, Gardner had a story in-progress.

well as adventure, mystery, and detective yarns set against primarily Western backgrounds. By 1933 he was selling a million words a year to the pulp magazines and was acknowledged as "King of the Woodpulps." He had raised his production quota to a novelette every third day, a pace he maintained even during a trip to the Orient. The following year was his busiest: he published thirty-seven novelettes, three novels, an article, and a short story.

Pulp writers were paid by the word and, like other pulp writers, Gardner learned to stretch a story to the utmost. One sharp-eyed editor commented that even though Gardner's characters had lightning draws and the reputation for deadly accuracy, they inevitably missed with the first five shots. Gardner was frank in his response: "At three cents a word, every time I say 'bang' in a story I get three cents. If you think I'm going to have a gunbattle over while my hero has got fifteen cents' worth of unexploded ammunition in the cylinder of his gun, you're nuts."

Eastern editors who thought they knew the West were the bane of Gardner's writing life. For example, during his travels he had come across Rhyolite, Nevada, a charming ghost town

with an elaborate railroad station dating back to the turn of the century. Researching the town's charter, he discovered that any three men who lived in Rhyolite for a specified period could elect themselves to office, vote ordinances, and levy taxes. So Gardner wrote "The Lord Mayor of Rhyolite," a rollicking tale in which a spurned cowpuncher quits his job and goes to Rhyolite to become its mayor and pass ordinances which give the meddling mother of his heart's desire her comeuppance, resulting in wedding bells for the young pair. Eastern editors unanimously agreed such a city could not exist. When Gardner sent photographs of the railroad station and other buildings, the chagrined editors found other reasons for rejecting the story. Regretfully, the author consigned the yarn to his morgue of unpublished stories, where it reposes to this day.

LATER, GARDNER TOOK UP WITH AN OLD PROSPECTOR in the desert mining town of Randsburg, California. From him the writer learned how a crooked assayer and a claim jumper had worked together. When he submitted the resulting story for publication, he found out from a New York editor that an assayer would "starve to death in Randsburg." All desert prospectors knew their ore; they had no use for assayers. Gardner prepared to send pictures of several buildings in Randsburg, each bearing a weathered sign, "Assayer."

Then he remembered "The Lord Mayor of Rhyolite" and thought better of trying to prove his point. Instead, he dug another old Western yarn out of his morgue, brushed it up with a fresh title, and sent it to the same New York editor with a letter to the effect that since the editor had such an encyclopedic knowledge of the West, he would undoubtedly appreciate this story. "Within a week I had received a check for six hundred and fifty dollars—and I had learned something about corresponding with editors. From that time on I sold this editor story after story. His magazine became one of my big markets."

By 1938 Perry Mason was well established and the demand for Gardner's work was so great that he had to forsake taking time to roam the West in his camp wagon as he wrote. He bought a 1,000-acre working ranch near Temecula, California, named it Rancho del Paisano, and made it his writing headquarters. Not the least function of his ranch was the education of visiting Eastern editors in the ways of the West. Upon arrival, they were provided with ten-gallon hats and horses: "If you get lost just drop the reins and your horse will bring you back."

As Gardner's reputation for being the world's most prolific writer spread, Rancho del Paisano began to defeat its purpose. He could not get any work done because of the many visitors who came to see how he worked. So he acquired a series of working hideouts scattered throughout the West; one consisted of a fleet of houseboats in the Sacramento Delta to house himself and his secretarial staff. But Rancho del Paisano remained the hub of his activities. From there he continued to launch exploratory adventures around the West and into Mexico by virtually every means of transportation, including helicopter and a Goodyear blimp.

On his camping-writing trips, Gardner gathered local color. "Just as some people take up the collection of postage stamps, I've tried to collect characters."

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Gardner reveled in his Western way of life and taunted desk-bound editors with gloating descriptions of his activities: "If you're inclined to be envious, get your envy machine all stoked up for action under forced draft. For I'm sitting out in the middle of the desert, stripped to the waist, sunlight glittering, a blue black sky, not a cloud in sight, not a breath of wind, air like wine, yet very warm without being hot. And if you think this isn't the life you've just been overcivilized, that's all."

Erle Stanley Gardner learned his craft as a writer through his Western tales, enabling him later to become "the most popular whoduniter of his times." It is a safe assumption that had it not been for his love of the West, driving him to seek freedom from the confines of his law office, Gardner would never have created Perry Mason, the character who carried him to the top of the best-seller list. **AW**

Francis L. Fugate *and* **Roberta B. Fugate** *are authors of a book about Erle Stanley Gardner,* Secrets of the World's Best-Selling Writer.

SOME STORIES ABOUT AUDACIOUS IMAGE MAKERS
WESTERN PHOTOGRAPHERS, I

BY PETER E. PALMQUIST

In our July/August issue, Peter E. Palmquist will consider the career of Robert H. Vance, a remarkable Western photographer of the nineteenth century.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

(Above) *A political carte de visite by Amasa Plummer Flaglor, 1848–1918, taken in Eureka, California, about 1874. Presumably reflecting the election of President Ulysses S. Grant, such pictures were common during the latter nineteenth century.*
(Opposite) *Charles Wallace Jacob Johnson, 1857–1898. A professional musician, as well as a photographer, Johnson worked his way around the West for many years before settling in a studio at the Hotel del Monte near Monterey, California. Johnson made the curious device he is playing here.*

WHO IS A WESTERN PHOTOGRAPHER? Can a bookseller from England become a Western photographer? What about a Swiss-born portrait painter? Does a person whose name is Lai Yong, or William Van der Haay, or Patrick McCarthy qualify? From the early years of photography in the 1840s to the end of the nineteenth century, thousands of men and women tried their hand at this art in the immense and varied area west of the Mississippi River. Collectively they are our Western photographers for that period.

Many of us can name at least one famous Western photographer: William Henry Jackson, Timothy O'Sullivan, Eadweard Muybridge (he was the English bookseller previously mentioned), Carleton E. Watkins, Adam Clark Vroman, or most surely Ansel Adams, who may be the best known of all Western image makers. With a little additional study this list can be expanded to thirty or more renowned, nineteenth century camera artists active in the West.

However, thousands of other Western photographers who made important contributions and led interesting lives are not on this list. All too many have been forgotten, neglected, or overlooked. Some have been victimized by the vicissitudes of time—their images destroyed by fire or carelessness. The careers of others, particularly the West's portrait photographers, have not yet been properly recognized. Many had only a brief tenure behind a camera; yet for a variety of reasons, their work has important meaning.

They were a mixed bag, those Western photographers. Some, like Lai Yong, came from as far away as China. Even the native born came from every state and territory in the country. Their origins were humble, or well-to-do, or someplace in between. They entered the trade as children or much later as adults seeking a new occupational or artistic outlet. For the most part, they were jacks-of-all-trades, as noted by a writer in 1858: "Today you will find a Yankee taking daguerreotypes; tomorrow he has turned painter; the third day he is tending grocery, dealing out candy to the babies for one cent a stick."

Sometimes even the most restless found their niches and stayed on, spending their lives capturing "likenesses" in Denver or Virginia City or wherever. Some were explorers, using their cameras to document and reveal the West's unique geography. Others were pioneer photojournalists who recorded the progress of the transcontinental railroad and the transformation of the frontier generally. While some merely visited the West, a goodly number left their bones there.

Often we have no record of the existence of these photographers other than the surviving photographs which bear their names. The potential for study—and real discovery—of Western photographers is extensive and highly rewarding. One researcher lists more than 2,600 nineteenth century photographers for California alone. Each has a story to tell.

COURTESY, CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY, SACRAMENTO

THE ITINERANT AND SMALL-TOWN PHOTOGRAPHER

DENTISTRY

—AND—

DAGUERREOTYPING.

Corner of Oregon and Lane Sts.,

(Opposite the M. E. Church.)

WILLIS & HAMILTON,

HAVE entered into co-partnership for the purpose of carrying on the business of *DENTISTRY AND PHOTOGRAPHY* and are now prepared to perform any operation pertaining to either branch of their business, in a style superior to any yet done north of Sacramento.

Every variety of picture known in the art will be taken, several of which have not been taken before in this place, viz: Photographs, Ambrographs, Plain and Crayoned, and transfer pictures on leather, India rubber, or oil cloth.

We have a Camera prepared expressly for landscapes, and one for children, which operates instantaneous.

We insert teeth on gold plate on a new and original plan, rendering the work more substantial and a perfect fit certain.

We use adhesive gold foil for plugging teeth, and warrant each plug to stand permanent.

We have also introduced Dr. Francis' method of extracting teeth without pain, by the application of the electro-magnetic current directly through the tooth, numbing the sensation.

We have a machine made expressly for the purpose, have taken instructions in its use directly from Dr. Francis, the inventor, and our experiments have proved entirely satisfactory.

We are permanently located in this county, and guarentee entire satisfaction in every instance, or the money refunded.

Prices to suit the times. Instructions given on reasonable terms.

Office hours from 9 o'clock in the morning to 9 o'clock next morning.

Two sets of Daguerreotype apparatus for sale.

WILLIS & HAMILTON.

Yreka, April 1, 1859.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

SELF-PROMOTION AND BLATANT ADVERTISEMENTS were the life blood of successful enterprise for the Western photographer during the nineteenth century. "Coming, Coming . . . Pictures, 50 cents a Bushel." "We are prepared to take photographs from LIFE SIZE down to the smallest size . . . by the million!" "Something New . . . Improved." "Save the shadow, ere the substance fly." "Pictures in the finest style, on glass, metal, oil-cloth, leather, or paper!"

Each photographer ballyhooed his product as being the latest and finest imaginable. In particular the traveling photographer used flashy insistent notices in local newspapers, supplemented with specially printed broadsides and banners. By this means, he announced his imminent arrival and/or equally imminent departure. "Hurry! Hurry! . . . Get your photos taken before next Tuesday night or you will get left. The Boston Photo Company will *positively* leave Fort Jones next Thursday." With these words the traveling photographer from the much heralded Boston Photo Company placed his notice in the *News,* Fort Jones, California. After passing out his broadsides, he hung his shingle at the Central Hotel where he awaited his clients.

So far, so good. Then the following Friday, just as Fort Jones's citizens were sitting down to supper, the dreaded cry came—Fire!!! Mr. Boston Photo Company had also gone to supper, leaving his kerosene darkroom lantern burning in his hotel room. The lamp had exploded and started the fire. "Every timber was dry as the summer sun could make it. . . ." In twenty minutes the Central Hotel, two barber shops, a fruit stand, a saloon, and the Odd Fellows Hall were engulfed in a mass of flames. "Women and children carried water and fought steadily with the men." In spite of these combined efforts, much of the business section fell victim to the flames. And Mr. Boston Photo Company? Business "as usual" in the nearby town of Etna.

Such accounts are legion and exemplify the uncertainty of nineteenth century life in the West. Even with the best preparation and planning, photographers sometimes found themselves in a tight spot. One of the earliest and, perhaps, the most repeated story about a traveling photographer dates from the middle of the century. A young daguerreotype artist and his traveling van arrived in a small town on the frontier:

Among the first of his customers were two respectable young ladies. . . . the "Professor" posed the first young lady and then retired into his darkened cubbyhole to prepare the silver [daguerreotype] plate. The second young lady took advantage of the operator's absence to satisfy the age-old woman's curiosity by peeking into the camera. Imagine her surprise to find her friend upside down on the focusing glass. "Oh Katy," she exclaimed, "you are standing on your head." Katy leaped from her chair in great confusion, and both ran with unmaidenly vigor from this den of iniquity that had so grossly insulted their girlish modesty. They were not content with running, however, for they spread the news of their experi-

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

ences to the villagers, with the result that an indignant mob formed, besieged the van, and finally sent it rolling over the hill, where it and its contents were destroyed; the operator felt lucky to get away with his life. (Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene*, 1964, pp. 65–66)

Anecdotes concerning photographers were favored among journalists generally. Usually gregarious and popular, the traveling man provided color and excitement—often in the form of the freshest gossip—to isolated communities. Besides, the newspaper office was one of the first places visited by a newly arrived camera artist.

One small-town newspaperman had a field day over the encounter of photographer George W. Crippen with a bear. (*Ferndale Enterprise*, July 14, 1899) Crippen began pumping lead into the animal, "two bullets taking effect, and Mr. Bruin rolled down the precipice about two hundred feet." Convinced that the bear was dead, Crippen went about his business, intending to deal with the carcass later.

(Above) *Yosemite photographer George Fiske, 1835–1918, and his famous "Cloud-Chasing Chariot." "He used to push that wheelbarrow for miles." Fiske was one of Yosemite's most colorful denizens, specializing in scenic views and tourist groups.*

(Opposite) *Photographers were often jacks-of-all-trades, as illustrated by this advertisement for a combination dentistry/photography establishment. "[we] are now prepared to perform any operation pertaining to either branch of the business." Yreka, California, April 1, 1859.*

COURTESY, THE BANCROFT LIBRARY

(Near right) *By 1898 a traveling photographer's van was quite sophisticated. Here we see one of a specially built fleet of wagons owned by the Garden City Foto Company of Los Angeles. Their specialty was outdoor photography. "Views of houses and grounds taken from 18 foot elevation." The extra height enabled the photographer to avoid unwanted foreground and to minimize perspective distortion in buildings.*
(Opposite) *Only a small number of pioneer photographers bothered to photograph the "pure" landscape. This view by Peter Britt, 1819–1905, of Jacksonville, Oregon, clearly shows the beauty and breathtaking splendor of the West. C. 1870s.*

On his return, Crippen found the bear still motionless, but a kick soon indicated that the animal was not dead. "With a growl the bear sprang to his feet," and Crippen again leveled his gun, but it "snapped, snapped, snapped," and he finally observed that "the thing" wasn't loaded. So, he loaded his gun and tried again but with the same result—he had inserted his pen knife (instead of a bullet) in the magazine and extracted it with great difficulty. After some time he succeeded in finishing off the poor brute. On arriving in town, Crippen described the heroic way in which he had "killed a bear," and asked for help in bringing home the carcass. But when the group reached the "slaughter ground," the bear was gone, only to be discovered feeding serenely on a nearby hillside.

AS TIME PASSED, THE PHOTOGRAPHER took his place in the everyday fabric of the frontier in the same fashion as the blacksmith or the butcher. Accordingly, as the routine of the community became more settled, the business of photography became more formalized. Brash young men, who had entered the life of photography for adventure or as an easy way to make a living, either dropped out or adapted to the ever-changing needs of their calling. Many tent-photographers took advantage of the new towns to settle in a permanent location as the resident gallery operator.

Some image makers, like John Oliver Welsh, combined many occupations. A veritable man for all seasons, Welsh was a perfect example of Yankee enterprise and ingenuity, who viewed the Western frontier as a land of enormous opportunity. Welsh, the itinerant photographer, produced a great number of photographs between 1863 and 1886. He traveled across nearly 1,000 square miles of northern California, "carrying on a Bonanza King's business in the photographing line." Welsh, the entrepreneur (miner, newspaper correspondent, postmaster, merchant, dabbler in real estate, builder and operator of lumber mills, strawberry farmer, candidate for county surveyor, Democratic party chairman), was also the founder of the town of Mott in Siskiyou County, California, becoming very rich in the process.

COURTESY, THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This type of industriousness and diversity of enterprise was also common among long-established village photographers as well. Jonathon Eldridge ran a furniture store and undertaking parlor and published the weekly newspaper in addition to his activities as a portrait photographer. When times were slow, Charles Wallace Jacob Johnson made extra money as a professional musician, W. J. McMillan tuned pianos, and others served as part-time miners or seasonally employed school teachers or census takers. Photographers formed one of the most eclectic groups on the frontier, interested in and willing to try anything.

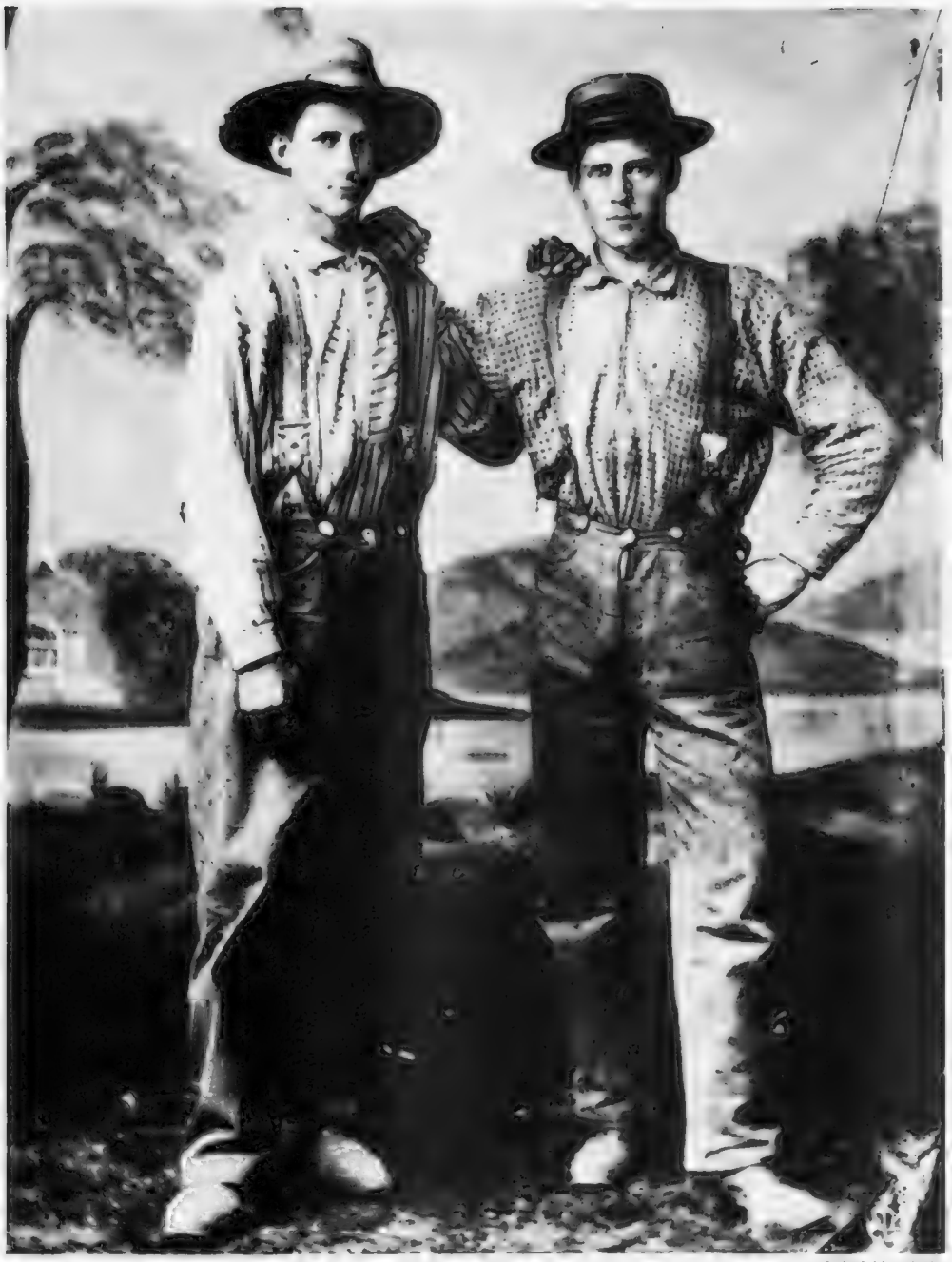
Entrepreneurial activity was not limited strictly to men. In 1850, for instance, Julia Shannon combined her work as a San Francisco daguerrean with her skills as a midwife, "rooms opposite the hospital." Many other women assisted their husbands in photography, while maintaining family responsibilities. In the small coastal town of Ferndale, California, Abbie Cardozo advertised "free hairdressing with each studio sitting." She was also an artist who painted her studio backdrops as skillfully as she retouched her portrait negatives.

Cardozo's life was remarkable in other ways as well. The sixth of nine children, she was forced into marriage at age fourteen by her parents, her husband being nearly as old as her father. When she opened her first photography business at age thirty, Abbie was divorced with three teen-age daughters to support. A businesswoman in the frontier West was unusual, a divorced mother even more so. Nonetheless, she not only competed favorably with the other three galleries in town—operated by men—but she successfully outlasted them all.

Another independent woman photographer was Mary Winslow who traveled widely doing all kinds of photography. Her routine was described by an incredulous journalist:

She travels in a buggy alone and thinks nothing whatever of driving her horse over any road....she is twenty-five years old, shrewd, self-reliant and not afraid of anything. Her only arms are a revolver and a man's hat, and she goes wherever she pleases....for finishing [her photographs], she

MRS. M. E. TYLER
PHOTOGRAPHER.



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

(Near left) *The tintype is one of photography's most interesting and inexpensive mediums. Nearly everyone had his "tintype took," including this sturdy pair. C. 1870s, by an unidentified photographer.* (Opposite) *Mrs. M. E. Tyler of Ashland, Oregon, c. 1890s. Colorful advertising was a must for nineteenth century photography. This self-portrait serves as a unique way to show both her product and her inventiveness.*

usually takes her negatives to her [hotel] and prints from the window of her private room, in which same room she tones, mounts, and does all the other things that are necessary to produce a first-class photograph, and for them she gets first-class prices....just after her return from the Yosemite, Miss Winslow received word from some real estate agents in Los Angeles, that they wanted some photographic work done, and she started, not on the train, but in her buggy, to do it for them. She reached there in good time, accomplished the work in the most satisfactory manner, and drove home again, all the way alone! (*San Francisco Examiner,* March 14, 1895)

EVEN WHEN A PHOTOGRAPHER enjoyed the benefits of a permanent gallery, adaptability was still an asset: "Meacham the photographer, asks only part pay in advance ...will trade photographs for deer horns, bear robes, wood, butter and eggs or anything else you may have...."

A notable gimmick which drew attention to one's establishment was important; it could bring free advertising in the gossip column of a local newspaper:

The town is very dull...Mr. Editor...and it will take a heap of scratching to get up anything worthy of a place in your well filled columns. Oh! I see several persons wending their way from town toward Higgin's gallery of art, bent on having their pictures taken no doubt, for some of them are dressed up within an inch of their lives. Higgins takes pretty pictures even of ugly people...with the assistance of the [lady sitter, her] long hair is drawn up into little kinks by the application of a hot iron. This process, though apparently a little barbarous, gives the picture a cute, saucy and cunning style. Then short, thin hair is brought down to an astonishing length and thickness by applying a good sized *switch* [of hair] to the back of the neck, this lends an air of strength and dignity to the likeness and tickles the vanity of the owner. (*Merced People,* Merced, California, May 17, 1872)

LANE COUNTY MUSEUM, OREGON

COURTESY, JOAN MURRAY

Such gimmicks were the name of the game. A. Liebert devised a lottery with raffle tickets at one dollar each and the promise of "great prizes." However, each time the drawing day approached, he conveniently arranged its postponement, until irate citizens clamored for his head. Louis Altpeter, another studio photographer, attempted to enhance his operation by providing gallery space to crayon artist G. Hamlet. In return for space, Hamlet colored Altpeter's photographs and gave public "lessons in every kind of drawing." Exactly one week after the advertised merger, Hamlet was arrested on a prior warrant for "obtaining money under false pretenses and horse stealing."

Partnerships were also an important aspect of Western photography. Some partnerships lasted only a few months, others for years. Some tent-men changed partners almost as fast as they changed towns.

In the process of attracting clients, *each* photographer competed with *all other* photographers. Conflict between the traveling tent-man and the resident studio operator, for instance, was inevitable. Usually fought in the pages of a local newspaper, these "wars" between photographers often produced wonderful doggerel, such as the following by gallery owner A. W. Gilfillan:

Traveling photographers are all getting grey,
They turn out their work in the very same way.
The same old song they always parade,
And try to fool the public that their pictures don't fade.
But they are grey and they are flat,
So just think of it, for time has proved that.
So if you don't want grey pictures which will make you repent,
The thing to do is to stay away from all tents.

Gilfillan, of course, neglected to mention that he had once been a tent-man himself.

Settlement of the West brought to a close the day of these wonderfully adventurous, enterprising, long-suffering, and gifted photographers. The images they left us document an exciting and important period of Western history. **AW**

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Peter E. Palmquist *is the university photographer at Humboldt State University, Arcata, California. His book* Lawrence & Houseworth/Thomas Houseworth & Company: A Unique View of the West 1860–1886 *will soon be released. It focuses on a San Francisco firm which specialized in mass production of stereographs.*

COURTESY, THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Above) *Cabinet photograph by Peter Britt, 1819–1905, taken about 1885. Located in Jacksonville, Oregon, Britt produced some of the West's most fascinating portraits, including this stylized studio portrait of an actress from a traveling company.* (Opposite) *The daguerreotype process was slow and cumbersome, with exposures sometimes as long as a minute. Even under the best of circumstances, several seconds were usually required to record the likeness of the sitter. This picture is a classic example of a mother's desperate attempt to hold her children still during the tedious proceedings. C. 1850s by an unknown photographer.*

Mapping the Southwest: Exploration, legend, and plagiarism

by Michael Duty

OLD MAPS OF THE SOUTHWEST tell strange and sometimes tragic tales of the first conceptions—more often misconceptions—of that vast region once appropriately called terra incognita. Surely no modern astronaut stepped upon the moon with greater trepidation than that experienced by the sixteenth century Spaniard Francisco de Coronado and his men as they began exploration of the Western wilderness in search of fabled cities of gold. The first men who landed on the moon had some comfort in the possession of maps of the planet and photographs of the spot where they would take their first steps. Coronado and his men explored the Southwest without benefit of a map or even an accurate sense of the land—a land filled with such creatures as rattlesnakes and gila monsters, tarantulas and scorpions that, at least in miniature, matched the monsters depicted on the seas and shores of contemporary maps.

The image of that band of armored horsemen and foot soldiers trekking painfully through the vast American landscape, across deserts, mountains, and raging rivers, picking their way past villages of people they had not even known existed, and incidentally gathering information for future maps—that image whets our imagination and kindles a respect for early maps that overlooks the sometimes humorous inaccuracies that are obvious even to a grade school student today.

Mapping the New World in the mid-1500s was not the work of satellites or even of skilled draftsmen working in the comfort of libraries in the Old World; it was the sweaty labor of explorer after explorer following one upon another, generation upon generation of daring and sometimes foolhardy adventurers who gradually expanded the world's awareness of the immense size and wealth of the West. From the first stories about the golden cities of Cíbola to nineteenth century railroad surveys that brought new details about the land and helped guide waves of immigrants, mapping the American West spanned three hundred years. Even the finely detailed techniques of map making by spacecraft and camera that are employed today can be traced to the first efforts of the first explorers to know and put down the lay of the land as they saw it.

Because maps are a unique blend of art, science, and history, they picture much more than a geographic area. They present an image of a culture at a particular time: the limits of knowledge and the degree of conceptual sophistication. During the early years of map making, this art also helped to perpetuate misconceptions about the New World and its people. Cartographers in Europe, far from the American wilderness, were eager to fill in the blanks on their maps with any information, even though it might be secondhand at best. Sometimes that information was the mere projection of a new dream of easy wealth.

Cortez's conquest of the Aztecs in Mexico and the riches that he found there, coupled with Pizarro's similar experience with the Incas in Peru, whetted European appetites for more plunder. Tales about the seven cities of Cíbola and of Quivira, another fabled land of milk and honey, were more than enough to inspire greedy interest in the Southwest. Beginning with Fray Marcos de Niza, the Spaniards set out from Mexico in pursuit of northern gold. The good friar actually did not travel far before he encountered some friendly Indians who told him exactly what he wanted to hear. He returned to Mexico to report that the legends were true, the cities of gold did actually exist. Fray Marcos's story was soon documented on a map, and for years afterward no map of the Southwest was complete without the words "Cíbola" and "Quivira" somewhere on it, even after Coronado's arduous and fruitless trek of 1540–42 proved once and for all that the myths were false. The Spaniards knew what really lay beyond the Southwestern horizon, but secrecy was their official policy. All field reports, including sketches, were turned over to the government for safekeeping, and even Spanish map makers often were not privy to the latest information. The rest of the European map-making community had to work with hearsay evidence and the few printed Spanish maps they could find and copy.

Given the general lack of information about the Southwest, few maps of that particular area were printed in the late sixteenth century; however, the region was covered in larger maps of the Americas. One of the best was published in the "first modern atlas" in 1570 by Abraham Ortelius, a leader of the Dutch map trade, at that time the finest in the world. Before Ortelius published his atlas, maps were printed in a variety of shapes and sizes. Though remarkably accurate for that day, Ortelius's map of North and South America shows egregious errors: the North American continent bulges to surprising width, great rivers traverse the continent in an east-west direction, and the Mississippi is nowhere to be found. This map was not the best aid for exploring the New World, but that is

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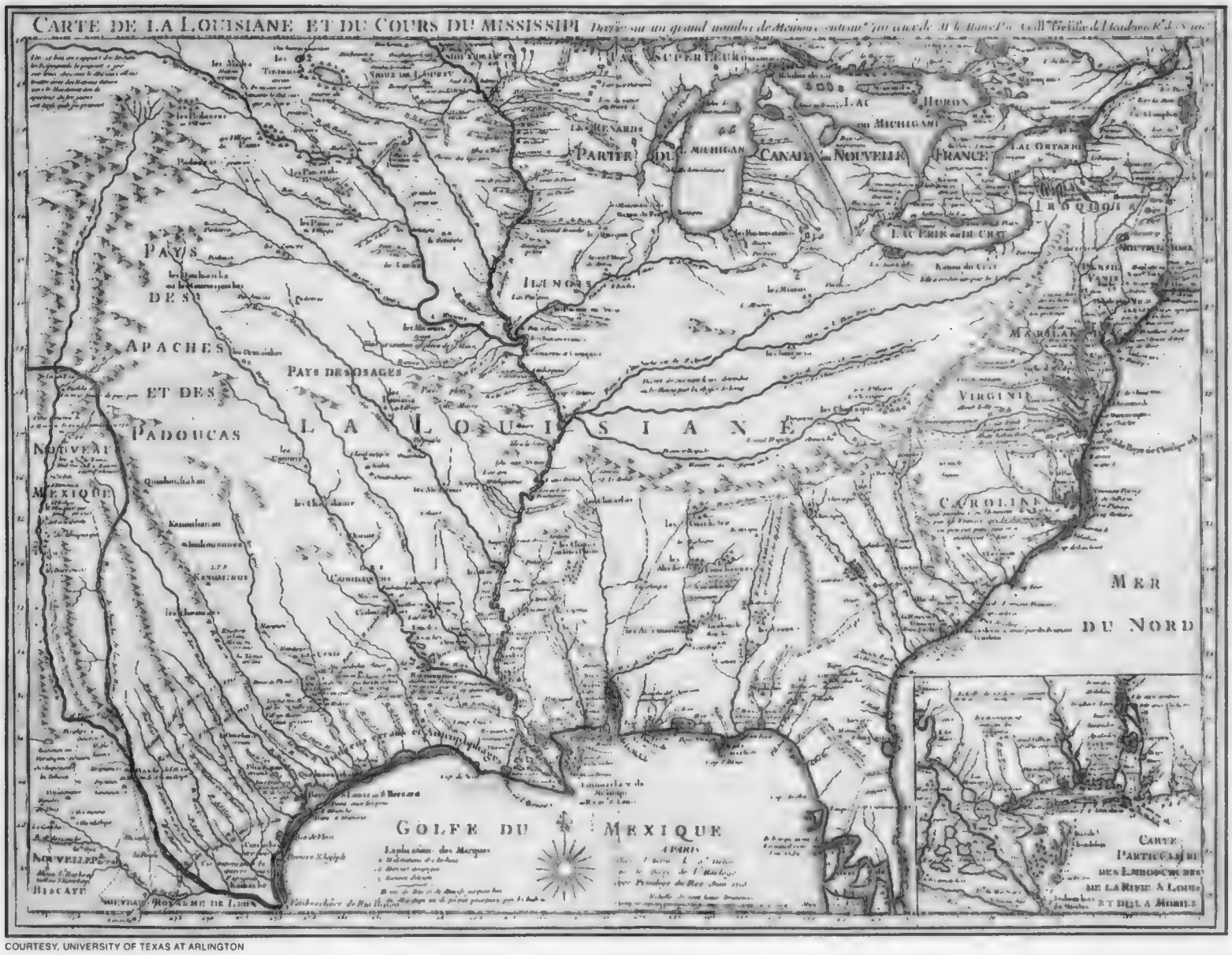
(Opposite)
Abraham Ortelius
"Americae Sive Novi Orbis, Nova Descriptio"
(1587, a second edition of the 1570 map)
Engraving, 36 x 50 cm.

Dutch map-maker Ortelius
published his version of North and South America in 1570,
an inaccurate chart for explorers.

COURTESY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

COURTESY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

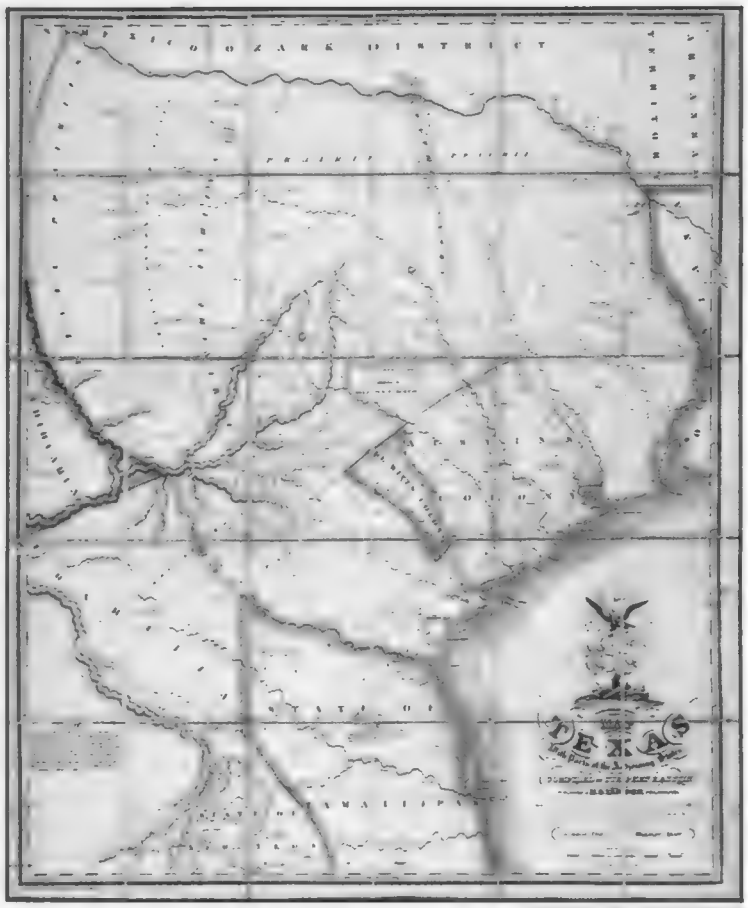
Early Southwest maps
were based on details from French explorers,
as Spain kept her knowledge secret.



COURTESY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

(Opposite)
Vincenzo Maria Coronelli
"America Settentrionale colle nuque scoperte fin all 'Anno 1688"
(Venice, 1688)

(Above)
Guillaume Delisle
"Carte de la Louisiane et du cours du Mississipi"
(Paris, 1718)
Engraving, 48.5 x 64.5 cm.



COURTESY, SAN JACINTO MUSEUM

(Above)
Stephen Fuller Austin
"Map of Texas with Parts of the Adjoining States Compiled by Stephen F. Austin." (Published by H. S. Tanner, Philadelphia, 1830)
H.c. engraving, 30⅝ x 25⅜ in.

(Opposite)
John Disturnell
"Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Méjico, Segun lo...." (New York, 1847)
Engraving, 74 x 105 cm.

exactly how it and others like it were often used. Exploration and map making have always gone hand in hand.

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, competition among European sea powers led to competition among map makers to produce authentic and attractive maps of the seas and the lands beyond. Cartographers copied freely from their colleagues' works, and some maps (such as those in Ortelius's atlas) were reprinted with only minor revisions for years, leading to the perpetuation of errors. Maps of this period were produced from copper engravings that were far easier to correct than earlier woodblock plates, but engraving a map was still a costly and time-consuming task. A master engraver might require as long as six months just to complete one small portion of a large map. Consequently, map makers were reluctant to change their maps, particularly those that sold well.

Early maps were prized for decoration, regardless of errors. The works of Vincenzo Coronelli, an official map maker at the French court, are masterpieces of decoration and attractive draftsmanship. What Coronelli lacked in accuracy, he made up for in style. His 1688 map of North America is covered with details denoting flora, fauna, and natives of the continent as they were perceived in Europe. Compared to Ortelius's 1570 map, this one contains a wealth of new information on the interior of the Southwest, gleaned primarily from French travels. La Salle's journey down the Mississippi is documented, but information about Spanish exploration in the area is sketchy, as Spain still kept secret her knowledge of the Southwest. Coronelli's map also illustrates one of the most outstanding cartographical mistakes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the depiction of California as an island. This error persisted for over one hundred years, even after the Southwest was crossed on foot, proving the inaccuracy.

By the early 1700s, improved methods of measuring distance, an increase in the number of firsthand observers, and better printing techniques all led to more accurate maps. A scholarly Frenchman Guillaume Delisle brought map making into the realm of science and offered new information about the Southwest. Delisle's 1718 map of Louisiana, claiming French domain over the interior of North America from New Mexico to Florida, was a landmark map that was copied for decades. It was first to give a fairly accurate placement of the Mississippi River, first to identify the land that is now Texas with a form of the word (mission de la Tejas), and first to document contact between French traders and the Spaniards in New Mexico and Texas. Because of the expertise of Delisle

In the map-making tradition of plagiarism, Disturnell's map caused controversy over an international boundary.

COURTESY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

Mapping the Southwest has continued the documentation of a history of varied contributions from numerous cultures.

and others like him, maps moved out of the realm of decorative collectors' items into the world of practical reality. By the nineteenth century both printing and surveying had improved to the point that maps could be produced fairly quickly and accurately.

In 1810 detailed information about the Southwest appeared on three important new maps—one by an American and two by Europeans. As a result of being held prisoner by the Spaniards for some four months in the regions of Santa Fe and Chihuahua, the American soldier and explorer Zebulon Pike was able to gather information for a map of the Southwest. His contribution was politically significant as the United States government needed information about Spanish lands adjoining the young nation's newly acquired Louisiana Territory. In the same year German scientist Alexander von Humboldt and British map-seller Aaron Arrowsmith produced important maps of the Southwest. Humboldt had traveled in the area as an official guest of the Spanish government and had been provided documents and surveys not available to others, while Arrowsmith had used the common sources for map makers of the time—public reports, interviews with explorers and existing maps. In an unresolved dispute Humboldt claimed that both Pike and Arrowsmith had copied his (Humboldt's) map. At any rate the three works gave specific information on the area, providing inspiration and guidance to westering immigrants.

One of the destinations of Americans on the westward march was the region now known as Texas, controlled by Spain until 1821 and then by an independent Mexico. American settlers founded permanent colonies in Texas under various arrangements with the Spaniards and Mexicans. One of those arrangements granted Stephen Austin the right to settle a number of families in Texas; in turn Austin agreed, among other stipulations, to produce an up-to-date map of the region. Based on other maps of the period and upon Austin's own field notes, his map of 1830 shows not only his colony but also land that had been granted to other *empresarios*. Austin's map was published in the United States by H. S. Tanner, one of the country's most prominent map publishers. Circulation of the Austin map and others depicting Texas spurred immigration to that area, adding to friction between the Mexican government and American settlers.

A map of political significance, showing the continental United States and the Republic of Mexico, was published by John Disturnell in 1847. Used as a basis for the treaty ending the war between the two countries in 1848, Disturnell's map became a center of controversy. Its history illustrates how common procedures of map making at the time compounded errors which resulted in long and difficult disputes over a common boundary between Mexico and the United States. Disturnell's map was one of a number of copies made over the years of a popular map issued in 1825 by the Tanner publishing firm. The original map, and consequently the 1847 Disturnell, was inaccurate regarding the course of the Rio Grande River, indicated as part of the international boundary by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The resulting furore arose over information that was twenty years out of date because a map maker decided to follow a tradition of three hundred years and copy what he wanted from an earlier map.

With the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, continental boundaries of the United States were established except for the later Gadsden Purchase and the acquisition of Alaska. In spite of its inaccuracies, Disturnell's map gives a good picture of the land as it was known in 1847. No longer labeled terra incognita, the Southwest was populated, boasting numerous towns and cities. Since maps of the area were common, they took on the ordinary appearance of practical documents, facilitating travel from one point to another, a great deal like modern road maps.

Mapping of the Southwest in succeeding years has continued the documentation of a history of varied contributions from numerous cultures. **AW**

Michael Duty *is the Public Relations and Development officer for the Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.*

The maps shown on these pages are from an exhibition organized by the Amon Carter Museum of Fort Worth, Texas, entitled "Crossroads of Empire: Early Maps of Texas and the Southwest, 1513–1900." The exhibit seeks to show the influence that maps played on the exploration, development, and eventual settlement of the Southwest from the earliest maps by the Spanish and French explorers to late nineteenth century railroad surveys. Produced in cooperation with the Cartographic History Library at the University of Texas at Arlington and sponsored by Justin Industries of Fort Worth, the show will be at the Carter from June 12 through July 26, 1981, and will then travel to museums in Dallas, San Antonio, Tulsa, and several other cities.

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The Westerners: Facing an

By Stan Steiner

Cowboys, horses, and helicopters—signs of the old and the new and of regional divisions in a period of dramatic change for Western land and people.

DALLAS TIMES HERALD/SKEETER HAGLER

era calling for new heroes

Colorado will not be the Congo. A new Mason Dixon line is being drawn at the 100th meridian. Regional politics are greater than at any time since the Civil War.

—Richard Lamm, Governor of Colorado

To some, the Reagan presidency represents a political shift to the right, which may or may not be true. But it indisputably signifies a geographic shift to the West. And the eighties may well become the decade of the West.

For many years the "Revolt in the Rockies," that commentator Joseph Kraft noted in a pre-election column, has been rumbling through the West. A presidential election was needed for the significance of that revolt to be noted, though not understood, in the East. To many of us in the West, the Reagan presidency and the "Sagebrush Rebellion" are merely the latest surface symptoms of what has been happening; they are the visible crest of a grass-roots ground swell. And they may be only the beginning of the growing conflict between the East and the West.

Economically, the center of the nation's gravity is moving West. The energy resources of the nation lie for the most part beneath the deserts and mountains of the West. More and more of our nation's industrial and financial future will depend on those energy resources, valued at hundreds of billions of dollars. The newly emerged Sunbelt, from Texas to California, may become secondary as a source of power. As Joseph Kraft has written, the West "is on the threshold of an economic transformation apt to combine what coal did for the Alleghenies with what oil did for Texas and the Southwest."

Conflicts between East and West have arisen because these energy developments are generally directed from the East and their profits generally taken from the West for the East. This has created what Governor Thomas Judge of Montana calls an attitude of "internal colonialism."

Politically, too, the sources of power may be moving West in an unprecedented manner. The recent census reflected a dramatic shift of population to the West. The states which grew fastest, gaining from twenty to sixty-three percent in population, were in the West: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Of the Eastern states, only New Hampshire gained as much. As the population moves to the West, so will the base of political power shift from the declining East.

During the last decade, for the first time in our history, more people moved from urban to rural areas (mostly in the West) than from the countryside to the cities. The effects of these changes are just now being seen and understood. They will alter not only the image the nation has of the West but the image the West has of itself.

Perhaps the movement into the West is replacing the usual political demarcation between liberal and conservative with that between East and West. This division may be seen in the recent joining of forces by the Cattlemen's Association and the Wool Growers with the Sierra Club and Wilderness Society in opposing the MX missile system, which all these groups fear is a threat to ranchland and the dwindling water of the West. The new division may be seen as well in Goldwater's angry attack on the "extreme right," when he stated that he ran for the presidency not so much to oppose the left as to oppose the East. The meaning of his statement is as clear to the West as it may be confusing to the East.

In the last election, the people of Arizona chose both conservative Republican Barry Goldwater and liberal Democrat Morris Udall to represent them in Washington.

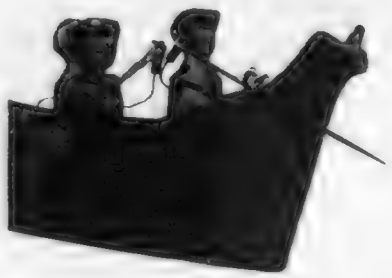
For more than a century and a half the West has been portrayed as a refuge of Jeffersonian individualism and Emersonian self-reliance. It has been the dreamland of not merely the cowboy ethic and the Marlboro machos but the heartland of our fondest and more enduring myths, the reservoir of our spiritual nostalgia. The irony is this: as the East seeks to emulate the West not only in its life-style but in its clothing and images, these aspects may be disappearing in the West, which as it becomes more and more urbanized, seeks to emulate the East. The paradox is intriguing and illuminating.

Even now there are more urban cowboys than rural ones. And so, the fantasy will increase as the reality that both shapes and limits it vanishes. Old Frank Dobie, the wonderful cowboy writer, once said prophetically that the cowboy will become more popular "when he no longer smells of cows."

The West is entering a turbulent era, a time of change as dramatic as that when the original homesteaders came West in their covered wagons, a change that may create heroes as great as the old myths.

I hope so. **AW**

Stan Steiner *has written widely about people of the West. His most recent books are* The Ranchers *and* Dark and Dashing Horsemen. *See "On the Trail of Joaquin Murieta" in* THE AMERICAN WEST *for January/February 1981.*



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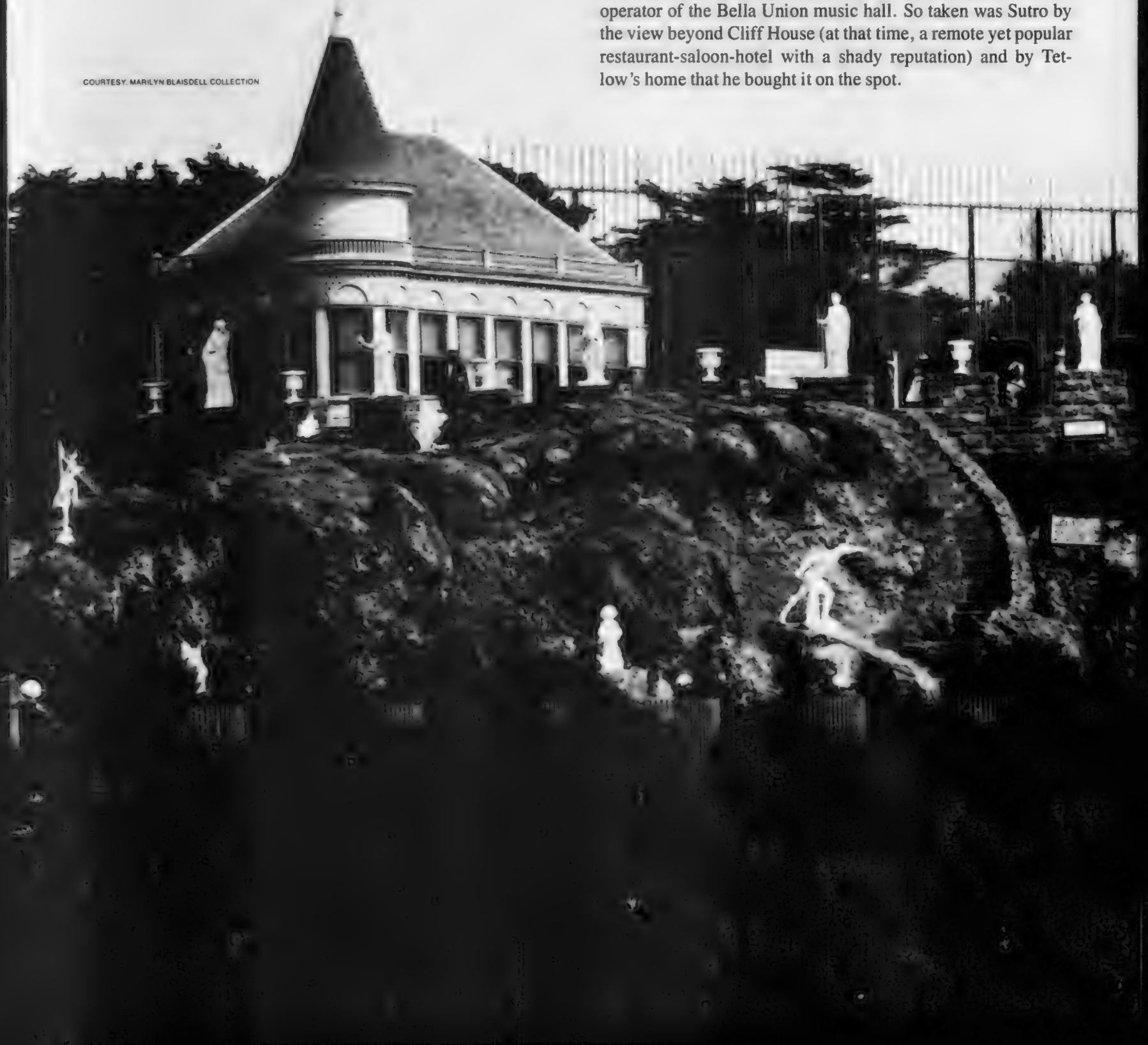
Sutro Heights Park: Traces of a dream

by James P. Delgado

Sutro elaborately decorated the bluff on his estate with classical figures, deer, and even a barking dog. Behind the sandstone parapet, he built a wooden observatory from which he enjoyed watching ships and seals in the ocean–and his employees working in the gardens.

From Devil's Slide in the south to Point Reyes in the north, Lands End affords a view of California's coastline for some thirty miles. On those days when San Francisco's fog cooperates and the view over the blue green Pacific opens to the horizon, the visitor to Sutro Heights Park can see beyond the guano-encrusted Seal Rocks all the way to the dim crags of the Farallon Islands.

It must have been just such a day in 1881 when San Francisco entrepreneur Adolph Sutro and his daughter Emma drove their carriage to Lands End to visit the seaside home of Sam Tetlow, a popular San Francisco saloon proprietor and operator of the Bella Union music hall. So taken was Sutro by the view beyond Cliff House (at that time, a remote yet popular restaurant-saloon-hotel with a shady reputation) and by Tetlow's home that he bought it on the spot.



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A stroll through the tree-shaded lawns of Old Grove brought visitors to a charming, wooden well house beside an unusual New Zealand evergreen. Built in 1887, the well house featured cast-iron drinking fountains in the shape of sea shells. All Sutro Heights buildings but this one were destroyed by WPA crews in 1939.

The view remains (dimmed today, perhaps, by more than fog), but time and neglect have despoiled Sutro's magnificent estate, leaving only traces of its past Victorian splendor. Today, among the thousands of visitors who enjoy the view from Cliff House, there will be some who catch the glimmer of Sutro's dream as it lives among wind-sculpted cypresses by a parapet over the sea.

Sutro's spontaneous purchase of the Tetlow home and eighteen acres surrounding it was the nucleus of Sutro Heights, an elaborate estate that would eventually cover almost twenty-five acres of beautifully landscaped grounds, entwined with numerous paths and decorated with hundreds of statues and planters. Victorian structures, topiary, and intricate carpet beds completed the decoration of Sutro Heights, with every feature on the grounds the personal choice and design of its owner.

Born into a middle-class Prussian family in 1830, Adolph Joseph Heinrich Sutro emigrated to America in 1849, a time of great political upheaval in the German states. Arriving in New York, he learned of the California gold discovery and, with typical aplomb, boarded the next ship bound for San Francisco, gateway to the gold fields. Sutro was then only twenty years old, but he shrewdly decided against an unstable career as a miner, choosing instead to benefit as a merchant from the city's gold-inflated market.

When silver was discovered in Nevada's Comstock Lode in 1859, Sutro became an investor. Then living in Virginia City, he devised a new method for the extraction of silver from its ore. Profits from his extraction scheme were applied to solving the problem of poor drainage and ventilation in the mines. His answer was the Sutro Tunnel, a long tunnel fed by a system of interconnecting smaller tunnels, which opened in 1879. By then, its owner was a famous and wealthy man.

COURTESY, MARILYN BLAISDELL COLLECTION

His next plan was to maintain his fortune through selective buying, selling, and leasing of San Francisco real estate. After returning to the Bay City, his first major purchase was the Tetlow estate. In 1881 he began to landscape the grounds of Sutro Heights, convinced that the barren sand dunes at Lands End could be made into prime real estate blossoming with flowers and greenery. Under his careful direction, sand dunes were leveled; loam was spread; paths, walks, and drives were graded; and thousands of trees were planted. Intricate patterns emerged from the living medium of flowers, low hedges, and shrubs. Sutro's elaborate scheme also called for the construction of a massive stone parapet near his home, a glass conservatory, ornate gates, and a thirty-foot wind fence to protect tender young seedlings.

Sutro's voluminous reading and world travels inspired additions to his garden. After a world tour in 1885, Sutro decorated his estate with hundreds of cast-concrete statues, planters, and fountains. The statuary, copied from classical and modern European artworks, filled the grounds with mythological creatures, animals, gnomes, and elves. Sutro was interested in each statue's "instructional qualities;" he wanted to show bohemian San Francisco what "art" really was.

The effect of all this was odd, but pleasing, as one contemporary account suggests: "Figures were to be seen on all sides, artistically arranged, and surrounded with lovely grass lawns studded with trees. Settees were invitingly placed to tempt one to rest and behold its grandeur. A living fawn grazed the succulent grass as far as the rope he was tied with permitted. A reclining statue of a large buck, with his long antlers suggested hunter's sport in the mountains. At a short distance stood a row of busts upon pedestals, in a circle, of eminent men of the past."

Although the plans were never realized, a slope covered with various dwarf species of trees was slated to be the site of the Sutro Library to house what was then reputed to be the world's largest private collection of books. Sutro envisioned scholars using the library and then strolling through the grounds in quiet contemplation.

Sutro Heights opened to the public in 1885. A free attraction, its only restrictions were that visitors could not deface the grounds, bring a picnic lunch, or take a carriage or horse through the property. The site's unusual beauty and unparalleled view of the Pacific coastline soon made it a popular stopping point for San Francisco visitors.

Sutro died in August of 1898, and the slow decline of his grand gardens began. Although his heirs wanted to maintain Sutro Heights as a public attraction, financial considerations called for the dismissal of many of Sutro's staff. Without

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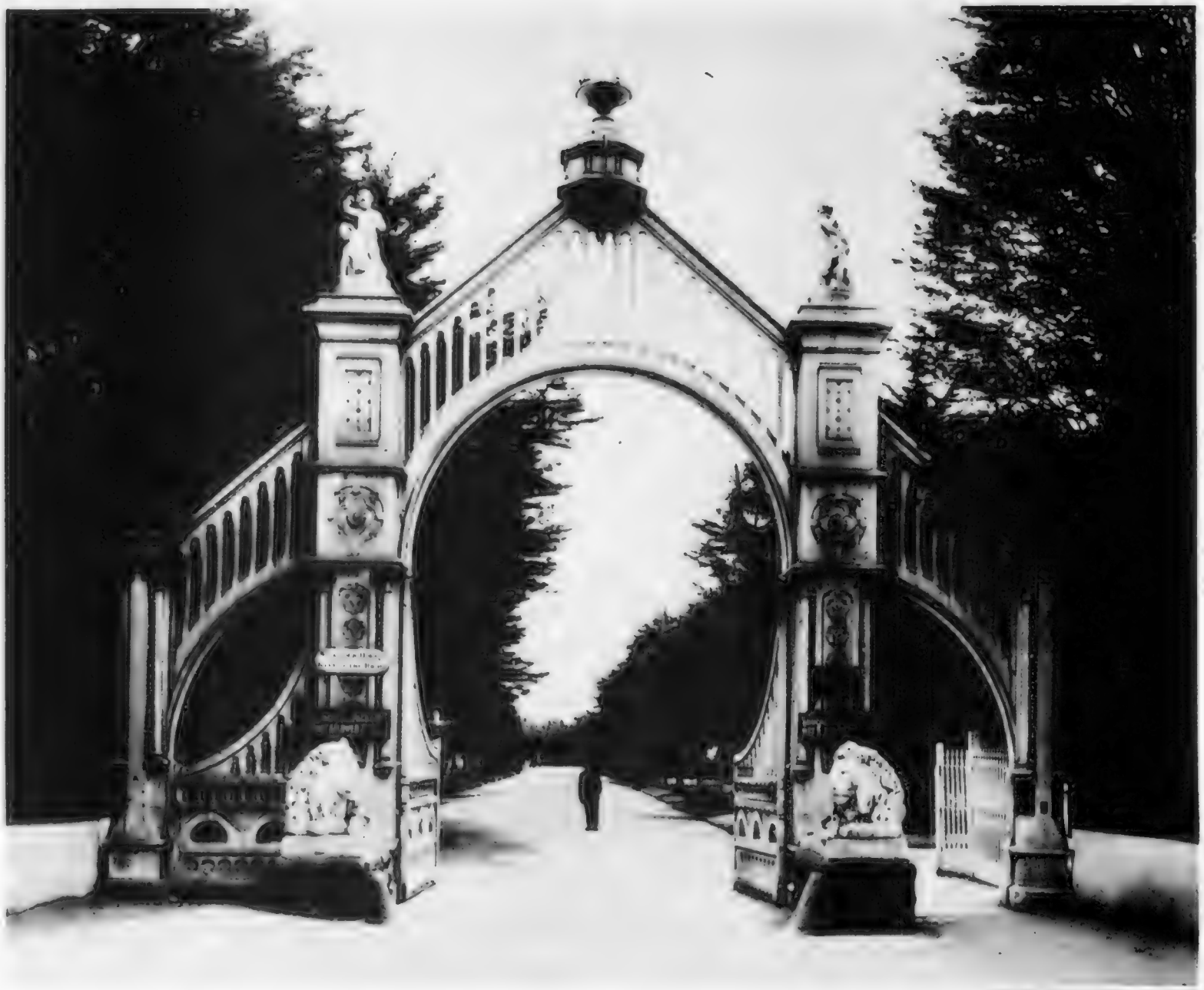
With a boutonniere in his lapel and walking cane in a gloved hand, Adolph Joseph Heinrich Sutro appeared as immaculately groomed as the lawns of his estate. A hedge cut to read "Welcome to Sutro Heights" can be partially seen behind him. Sutro was Mayor of San Francisco at the time of this photograph, c. 1896.



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To enter Sutro Heights, visitors passed beneath Gothic wooden gates thirty feet high. This entrance, at Forty-Eighth and Lobos avenues, was "guarded" by a pair of lions, cast in Belgian concrete and copied from the Nelson Victory Column in London's Trafalgar Square.

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necessary care, the once-proud gardens inevitably deteriorated, and the buildings fell into disrepair. By 1920, when Emma Sutro deeded the property to the City of San Francisco, Sutro Heights was no longer the trim, well-kept estate that her father had known. The public, however, still had access to the property, for Emma's arrangement with the City stipulated that it be "forever held and maintained as a free public resort or park under the name 'Sutro Heights.'"

In 1939, following Emma's death, Works Progress Administration crews, at the City's request, demolished every structure, with the exception of the parapet and the well house, and removed many of the statues. The Heights, sadly altered, remained in reasonably good repair until the early 1950s, when extensive vandalism and lack of maintenance took a heavy toll. Remaining statuary were either smashed or stolen, and the gardens were covered by weeds, leaving Sutro Heights little more than an overgrown jungle. In 1976 Sutro Heights Park became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Today, traces of the old Sutro Heights are emerging as Park crews carefully clear away the brush and debris of decades. Restoration is steadily revealing the splendor of this seaside estate and giving new life to its creator's glorious dream. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

The best and most recent biography of Adolph Sutro is Robert E. and Mary Frances Stewart, *Adolph Sutro: A Biography* (1962). Barbara Elam, *The Separate World of Sutro Heights* (1975) and James P. Delgado, *Historic Structure Report: Sutro Heights Park, San Francisco* (1980) deal specifically with Sutro Heights. A good history of Sutro Heights Park is included in Anna Coxe Toogood, *Historic Resource Study: The Bay Area Community, A Civil History of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area* (1978).

James P. Delgado *is a historian for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.*

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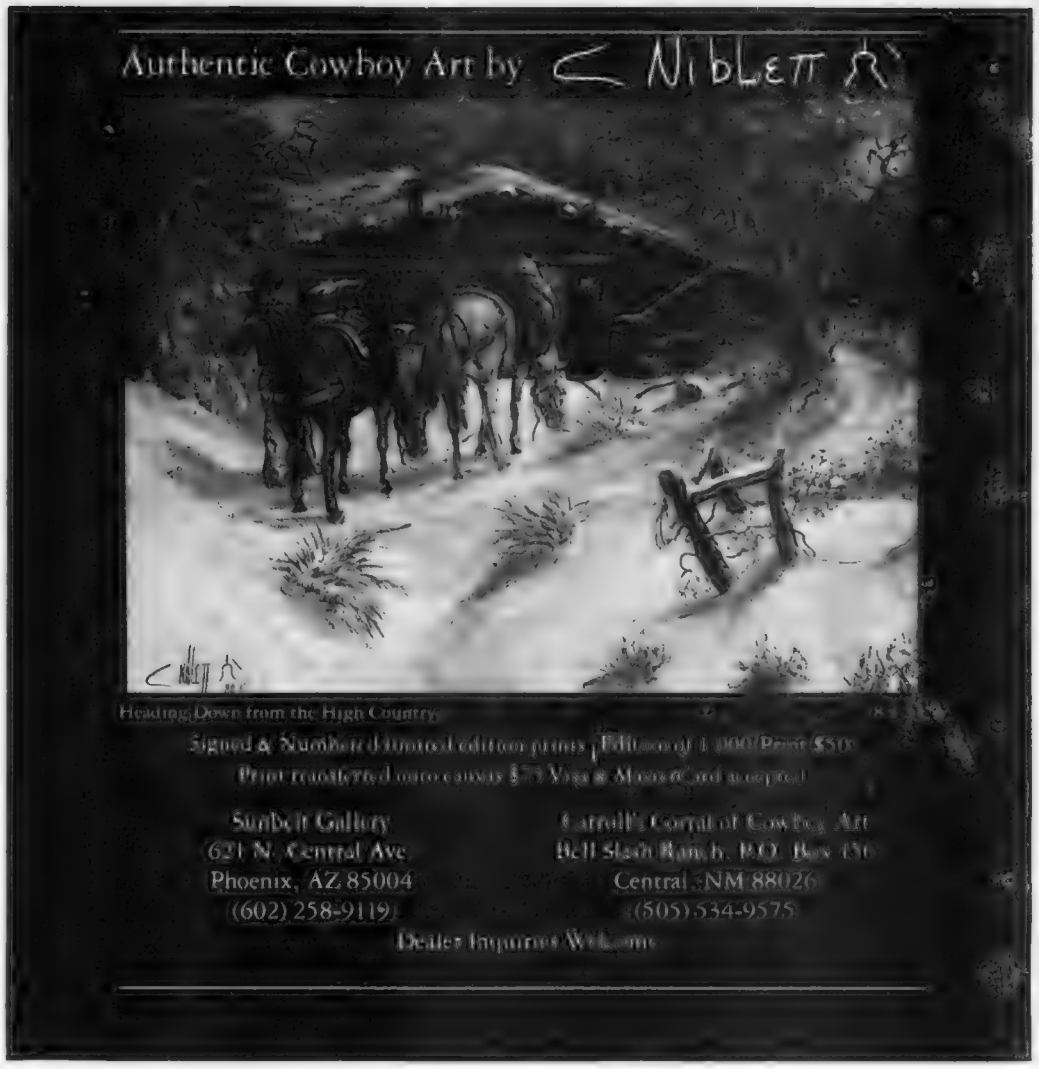
Western Lookout

(Continued from page 17)

came to be known as "the little iron men." U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii, a member of the unit, spoke at the Army's opening ceremonies for the exhibit, intended as a symbolic "about-face" after the imprisonment of thousands of Japanese Americans in relocation camps during the war. The exhibit of photographs and memorabilia will continue through March of 1982.

Trail Daze. June 4 through 7 in Boise City, Oklahoma, will be a time for reliving the days when this town was a stop on the historic Santa Fe Trail stretching from Kansas City, Missouri, to Santa Fe, New Mexico. This year's Santa Fe Trail Daze promises several western forms of fun: square dancing, tug of war, horseshoe throwing, and a Posthole Digging World Championship.

Kah Tai Lagoon. More than one hundred thousand dollars of federal funds have been given to the state of Washington to help in the acquisition of seventy-eight acres of marshlands in Port Townsend. The lagoon, intended to be the central feature of a natural area park, will provide wildlife observation sites and visitor trails while serving as a buffer against growing commercialism in the area. **AW**



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THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

Long Steel Rail: The Railroad in American Folksong

Reviewed by John O. West

Long Steel Rail: The Railroad in American Folksong *by Norm Cohen, music edited by David Cohen (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1981; 710 pp., illus., biblio., append., notes, index, $49.95).*

America's century-long love affair with the railroad is nowhere more evident than in folk songs. Ask anyone with a touch of romance in his soul what the word "railroad" brings to mind. If that person is fifty or over, you can bet that "Casey Jones" or "The Wreck of the Old 97"—or maybe, for the really sentimental, "The Baggage Coach Ahead"—will be recalled.

The explanation is easy: since the 1830s, when the steam engine began to move people and products through the post–Civil War era, when the transcontinental rails were laid across plains, desert, and mountains, the iron horse has meant adventure, excitement, and far-away places. Even today there are many who lament the passing of the old steam locomotive with its lonesome whistle and almost-living personality. Just as Mark Twain's Mississippi steamboat lured many a young lad to a pilot's life on the river, most young boys away from the Mississippi could dream of no higher calling than that of a locomotive engineer.

Norm Cohen's collection of railroad songs is big enough—710 pages, covering eighty-two songs and almost uncountable variants of them. It is not, however, one of those popular sing-along books so common during the folksong revival era—those books with simplified tunes and guitar chords, and often bastardized texts that mix traditional folk verses with forms recast by popular "folk" singers. In fact, the sheer weight of Cohen's scholarship would blunt the effervescence of the teenie-bopper or groupie who "just looooves folk music." The task that Cohen set for himself was to know everything that could be known about each song, each variant, each "hillbilly" or "race" rendition that has been located. You cannot fault his scholarship.

Take "In The Baggage Coach Ahead" for an example of thoroughness. The original tells the heart-rending story of a crying baby on a train; the father can't quiet her down. Irate passengers raise particular Cain with the father, demanding that the mother be brought to soothe the child. "'I wish that I could,' was the man's sad reply/'She's dead in the coach ahead.'" Cohen notes that versions of this sad story, in widely differing forms, were published as early as 1884; and vaudeville performers, hillbilly singers, and Tin Pan Alley types made it a widely popular piece. To complicate its story, everybody and his dog has a different version of the "true incident" that inspired the song—who the father was, when and where and what the circumstances were. The tale's evergreen appeal is suggested by the fact that some version of the song has been recorded by dozens of singers; Vernon Dalhart alone is responsible for forty-six discs of it.

Cohen has organized his collection of songs logically, using such headings as "Heroes and Badmen," "The Fatal Run," "Asleep at the Switch," and "Life's Railway to Heaven," the last three using actual song titles.

No collection of railroad songs could do without "Casey Jones," since it typifies so well the heroism of men in a dangerous profession. My own interest in Casey's story is strengthened by the fact that my father worked on the Illinois Central some years after the fatal wreck. He also knew Sim Webb, Casey's fireman on that trip, and loved to sing (when Mother wasn't around) a number of "colorful" verses, including one that began "Casey Jones, he was a sonofabitch./ He run his train in a forty foot ditch...." Now whether Casey was a daredevil who should have known better or a hero who stayed in the cab doing his best to stop his engine, he's still the "top rail" of American song. And Cohen's twenty-six pages of texts, discography, history, and legend do justice to Casey—as well as making good reading. We learn about "Casey, Kassie, K.C." Jones and the many claims for authorship of the popular ballad. We are also tantalized by the mention (but not the texts) of numerous bawdy versions—but at least Cohen cites his references, so we can look 'em up! I wonder if Dad's version has been printed.

Norm Cohen's use of commercial recordings and works by known authors (even if the authors have to be ferreted out by diligent research) will be faulted by those who say folk song can have no taint of print or record to mar its genealogy. But Cohen follows a much more realistic view: every song must have had an author, and what may have begun as a formal poem can catch the imagination of the folk who reshape it and make it their own. Conversely, a folk song that was created and then recreated by the process of oral transmission can catch the imagination of the commercial artist, who knows the value of what he finds, as well as its appeal to his listeners, whether they hear him on Vocalion Records, WSM radio, or a Folkways disc of today.

The book provides more than one might imagine in memorabilia, almost forgotten history, and the delightful excitement that once surrounded the American railroad with song.

AW

Founder, and editor for the first seven years, of The American Folklore Newsletter, **John O. West** *is professor of English and folklore at the University of Texas at El Paso. Along with his passion for railroading, he collects and films Southwestern folklore.*

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WESTERN BOOKS IN BRIEF

Spirit Woman: The Diaries and Paintings of Bonita Wa Wa Calachaw Nuñez *edited by Stan Steiner (Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1980; 243 pp., illus., $12.95).*

Bonita Wa Wa Calachaw Nuñez was an American Indian spiritualist whose view of the world was unique, childlike, and profound. Her haunting diaries capture the intensity of her life as a self-taught painter and determined crusader for women's and Native American rights during the early decades of this century.

The Dream Comes True: Great Houses of Los Angeles *by Brendan Gill (Lippincott & Crowell Publishers, New York, 1980; 214 pp., illus., index, $40.00).*

Lavishly illustrated in color and black and white, this large volume presents houses of Los Angeles which reflect the ego, bad taste, and good taste of their owners and designers.

Henry Brown: The Outlaw-Marshal *by Bill O'Neal (Creative Publishing Company, College Station, Texas, 1980; 165 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $12.95).*

Henry Brown was tough enough to rob a bank and to police a wild western town in the days of Billy the Kid. O'Neal's account of this gunman's double life is filled with posses, shootouts, and violent death.

Sacred Places: British Columbia's Early Churches *by Barry Downs (University of Washington Press, Seattle, and Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, B.C., 1980; 175 pp., illus., glossary, biblio., index, $29.95).*

Awesome Kwakiutl Indian monuments stand side by side with simple, wooden, Christian churches on the pages of this beautiful oversized volume. Downs, an international authority on architectural restoration, has written an informative history of the wilderness churches of British Columbia to accompany his sensitive, color and black-and-white photographs.

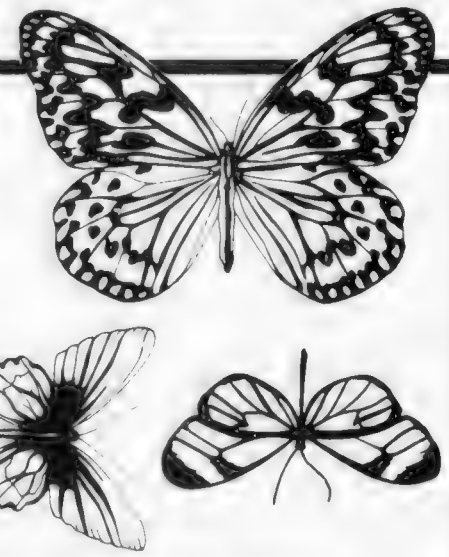
The Life and Adventures of John Muir *by James Mitchell Clarke (Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1980; 338 pp., illus., biblio., index, $7.95 paper).*

This popularly written biography traces Muir's development from "starry-eyed wanderer to dedicated explorer and determined conservationist." The author draws extensively upon Muir's journals in his warm characterization.

Emerson Hough *by Delbert E. Wylder (Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1981; 163 pp., chronology, notes, biblio., index, $13.95).*

This concise biography examines the life and work of an author and conservationist

Spring Offerings



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—*Library Journal*
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who wrote numerous popular stories, novels, and commentaries about the West. Hough was both fascinated and horrified by the rapid changes occurring during his lifetime (1857–1923).

Utah Folk Art: A Catalog of Material Culture *ed. by Hal Cannon (Brigham Young University Press, Provo, Utah, 1980; 149 pp., illus., notes, $10.95 paper).*

Based on the Utah Folk Art Exhibition, this catalog will delight anyone who enjoys beautiful and interesting old objects. An entertaining text discusses the history of the items pictured, which include furniture, quilts, wood carvings, houses, Indian crafts, and stone grave markers.

They Tried To Cut It All *by Edwin Van Syckle (Friends of the Aberdeen Public Library, Aberdeen, Washington, 1980; 308 pp., illus., append., notes, biblio., index, $17.95).*

Once a logger and millhand himself, Van Syckle skillfully captures the beauty of Washington State and the colorful figures who tackled its gargantuan Douglas firs in a brawling, vainglorious attempt to "cut it all." Wonderful old photographs of loggers at work enhance this thoroughly delightful book.

The Great American Chili Book *by Bill Bridges (Rawson, Wade Publishers, Inc., New York, 1981; 219 pp., append., glossary, biblio., index, $7.95 paper, $12.95 cloth).*

Much more than a cookbook, this enjoyable salute to a popular Western dish is filled with anecdotes and lore related to chili and Americana. It gives recipes for over one hundred variations which were collected from chili champions, celebrities, Texas ranches, and the U.S. Army.

Secrets of the World's Best-Selling Writer: The Storytelling Techniques of Erle Stanley Gardner *by Francis L. and Roberta B. Fugate (William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York, 1980; 286 pp., illus., append., biblio., index, $12.95).*

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Continued on page 75

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Books in Brief

(Continued from page 71)

Collection at the University of Texas Library have yielded a chronicle as fascinating as any of the Perry Mason tales that Gardner created. Gardner taught himself the art of narrative, and the Fugates have distilled fifty years of his notes and correspondence into an absorbing account of his development from pulp magazine writer to best-selling author.

Beef, Leather and Grass *by Edmund Randolph (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1981; 286 pp., illus., $14.95).*

Life on the vast grazing lands of a 1940s cattle ranch forms the basis of this spirited narrative. Crusty cowhands, an Austrian princess, and other enjoyable characters enliven the story of an operation to bring steers from Mexico to Montana for fattening.

American Genesis: The American Indian and the Origins of Modern Man *by Jeffrey Goodman (Summit Books, New York, 1981; 285 pp., illus., notes, append., biblio., index, $11.95).*

Vigorous controversy surrounds this examination of new evidence that our first fully human ancestors may have originated in the New World instead of in the Old. Goodman presents his arguments identifying California as the possible "Garden of Eden" in a lively, readable style.

Cuentos: Tales from the Hispanic Southwest *by Jose Griego y Maestas and Rudolfo A. Anaya (The Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe, 1981; 174 pp., illus., glossary, $6.95 paper, $12.95 cloth).*

Twenty-three folk tales from the tradition of Hispanic settlers in New Mexico are simply and charmingly told in two languages. Spanish and English transcriptions of these stories of magic, witchcraft, and everyday village life appear on facing pages.

Seeking the Elephant, 1849: James Mason Hutchings' Journal of his Overland Trek to California, *edited and introduced by Shirley Sargent (Arthur H. Clark Co., Glendale, California, 1980; 209 pp., illus., index, $30.00).*

The details Hutchings chose to record in his journal form a vivid and fascinating picture of the trials and pleasures of his eighteen-month journey from England to the California goldfields by sailing ship, Mississippi steamboat, and wagon train. **AW**

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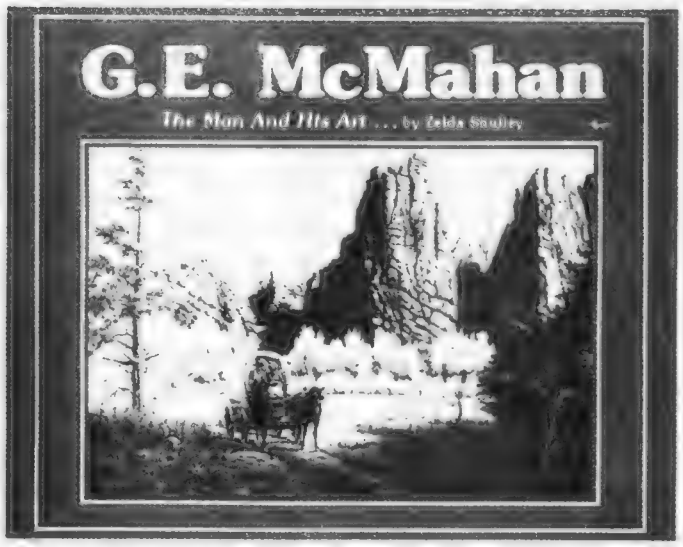

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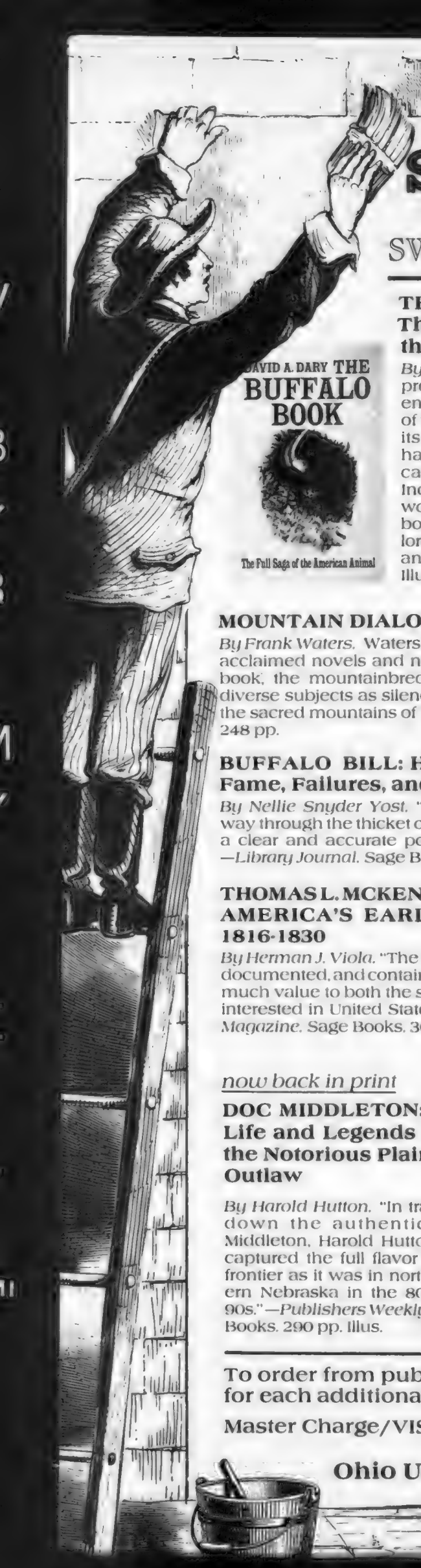

THE BUFFALO BOOK: The Full Saga of the American Animal

By David Dary. Extending from prehistoric times into the present, this book surveys the origin of the buffalo in North America, its locations and migrations, habits, symbolism, its significance and key role in both Indian and white cultures. Also woven throughout this fact-filled book are fascinating threads of lore and legend about this great animal. Sage Books. 374 pp. Illus. $17.50

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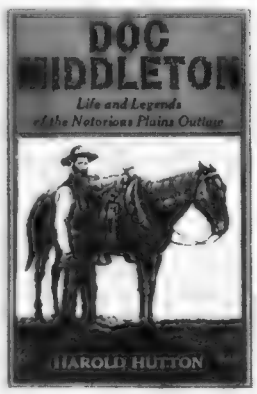

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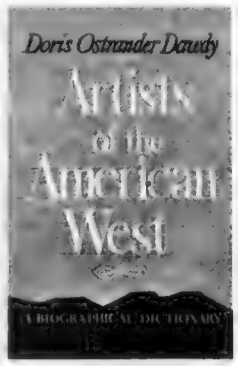

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Western Snapshots

During the early 1900s in Mariposa, California, a summer stroll through town was not complete without a leisurely stop at the sweet shop. This glass-front store had Mariposa's only soda fountain, serving customers with a yen for homemade ice creams and candies—or cigars. The sweet shop also promised conversation, savored inside the cool recesses of the store or outside under its broad awning.

Six men and a boy are captured in this 1907 snapshot, but citizens of Mariposa fondly remember a woman as part of this scene. Mrs. Hattie Bray, a favorite chaperone at school dances, ran the sweet shop and made all its ice cream herself. Standing by the peanut cart is her nine-year-old son Oscar, toes bare and one elbow propped on the sidewalk sign. He had the important daily chore of milking the family's two Guernsey cows for his mother's ice cream.

Oscar's father Winfield Bray stands near the door, a dignified sight in his candy-striped shirt and suspenders. Bray played two prominent roles in town; he owned Mariposa's two saloons and—as sheriff—"rode shotgun" for the stage. Across from him, several neighbors pose solemnly for the camera. Each man is dressed differently, but even the most informal outfit includes a hat in keeping with the custom of the day.

This intriguing snapshot of "Mother's sweet shop" comes to us from Oscar's widow Helen Bray of Henderson, Nevada. Its details preserve the memory of one treasured western boyhood.

THE AMERICAN WEST offers twenty-five dollars to any reader whose western snapshot is accepted for publication on this page. We seek old photographs which tell stories of bygone times. Especially welcome are pictures depicting some forgotten aspect of western life, serious or amusing. Space is limited; so, we have to be selective. We'll take good care of your pictures and return them promptly. Be sure to pack the snapshots carefully and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Send submissions to THE AMERICAN WEST, Western Snapshots, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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New print releases from Gray Stone Press by three of America's foremost artists

JASON WILLIAMSON
PHILLIP CROWE
DAVID WRIGHT

WATER BRIDGE
by Jason Williamson
29½" x 21½"
S/N 500 $100

THE BANDITS
by Phillip Crowe
19" x 28"
S/N 2,000 $50
Remarqued A/P 100 $100

THE HUNTER
by David Wright
22½" x 29"
S/N 1,000 $75
Remarqued A/P 100 $125

For further information about these artists and Limited Edition Collector Prints from their works contact your nearest Gray Stone dealer. For the name and address of the dealer nearest you please write or call us collect and we will put you in touch.

Gray Stone Press Limited Edition Collector Prints

205 Louise Ave.
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 327-9497